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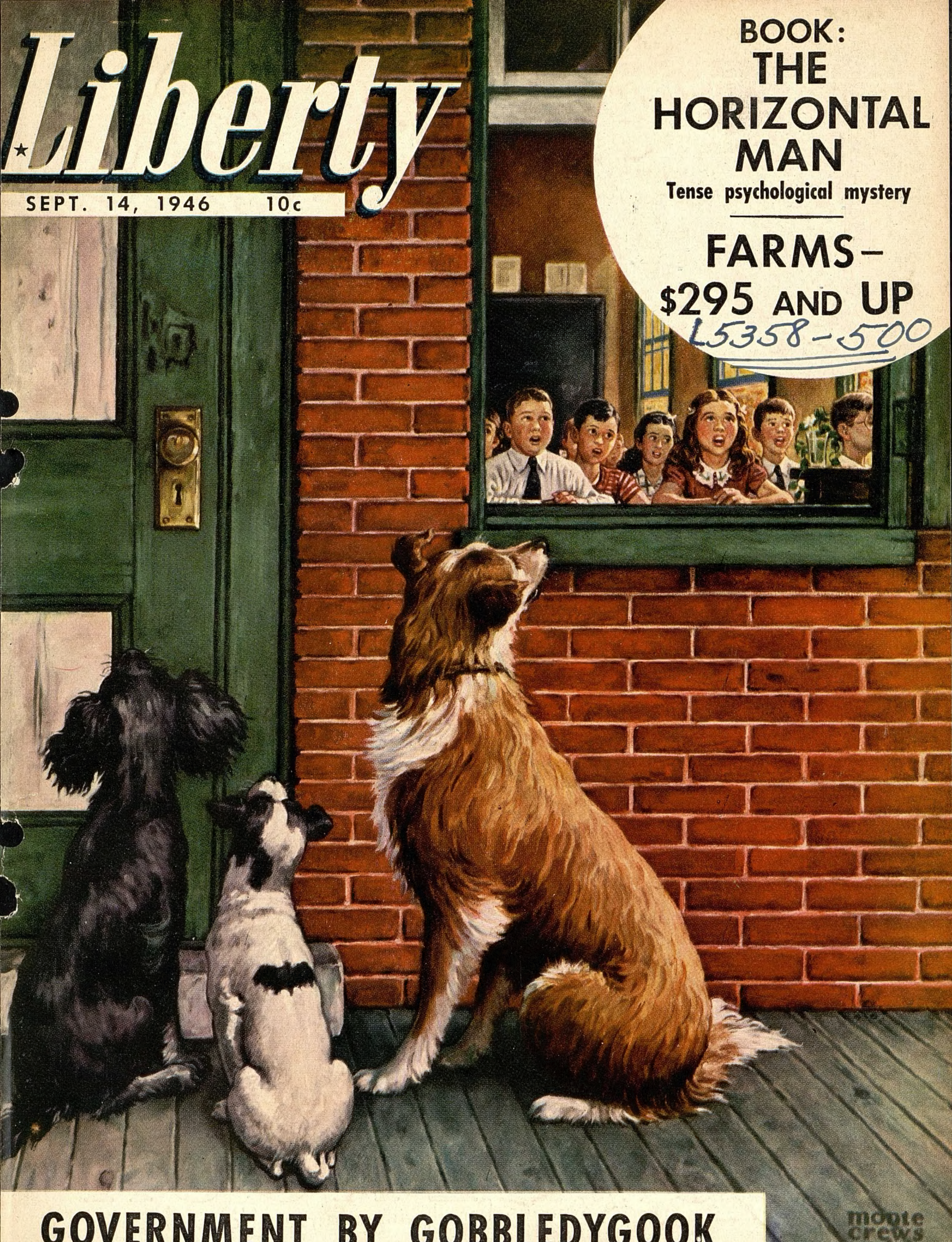

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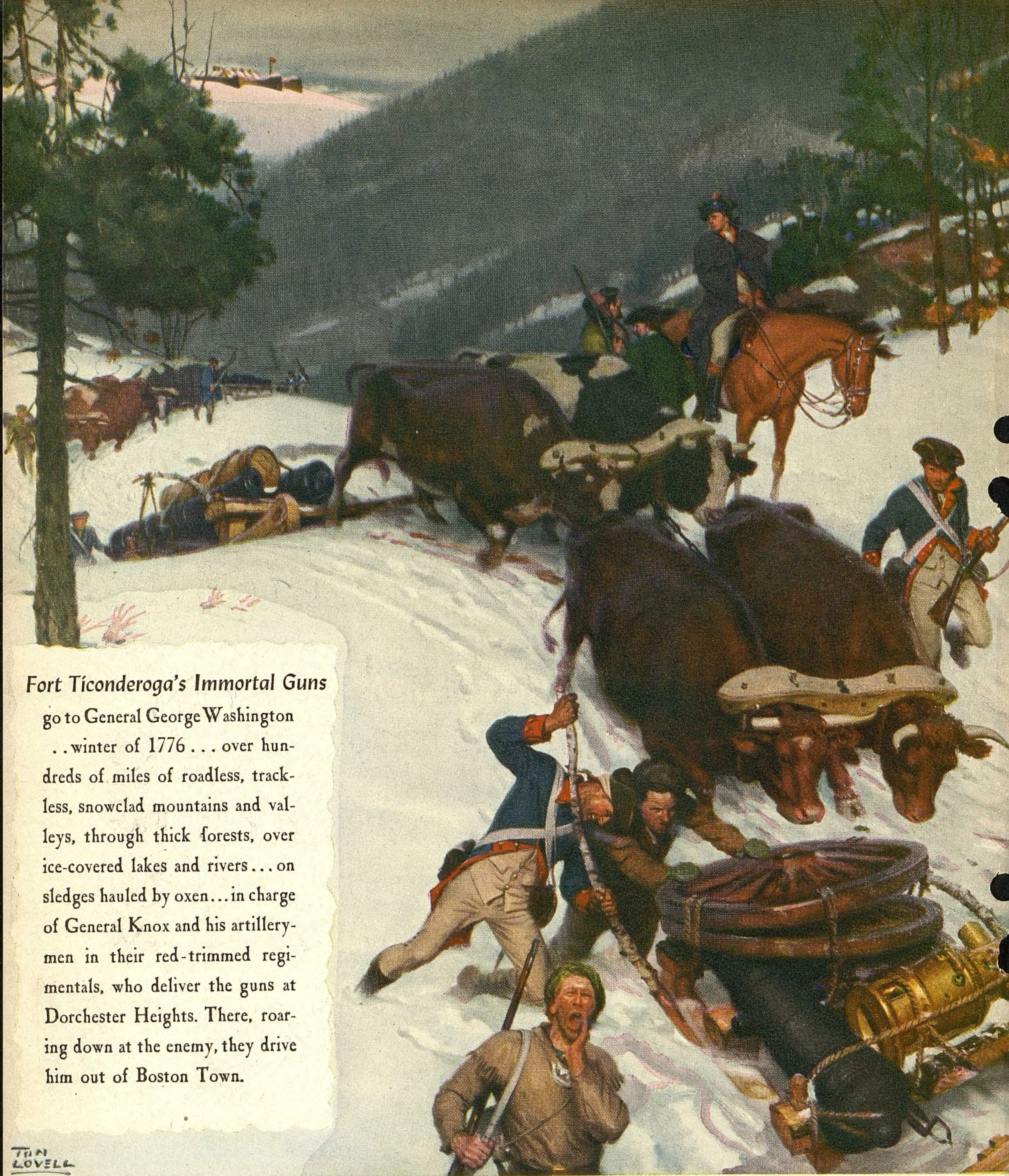

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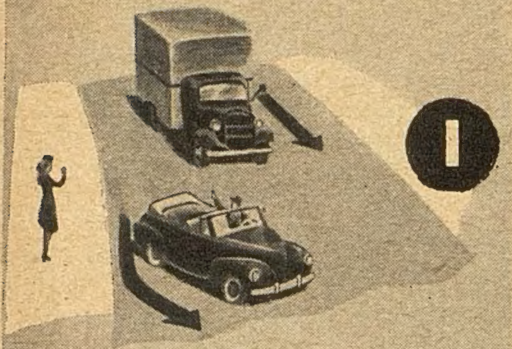
which drivers would you ticket?

Police departments all over the nation are doing everything they can to promote safe driving and prevent accidents. If you were a policeman, to which of the drivers illustrated would you be likely to hand a summons? Here's a hint—in the ten pictures there are eight flagrant violations of law and common sense. (If you can't spot all eight in a minute or two, we suggest you send for the free booklet, "Professional Driving," offered at the bottom of this page.)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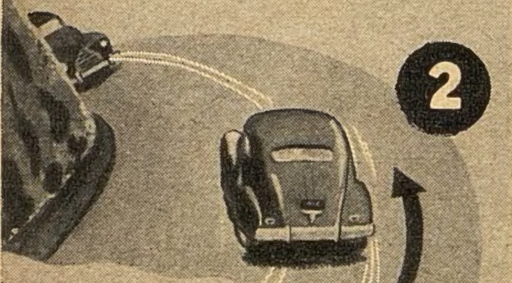
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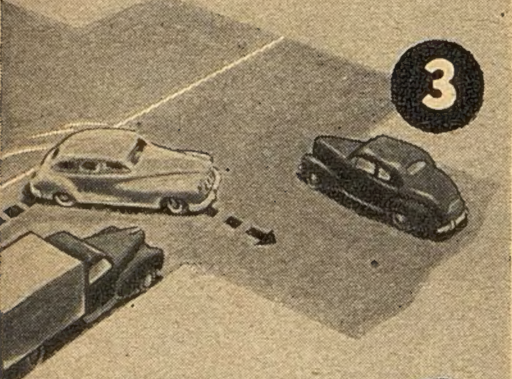
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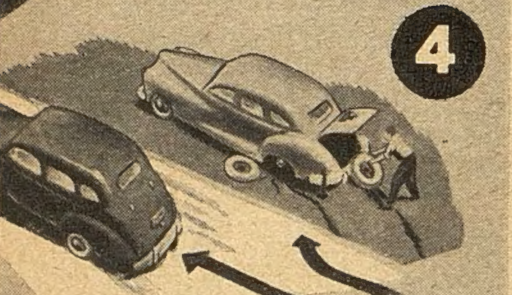
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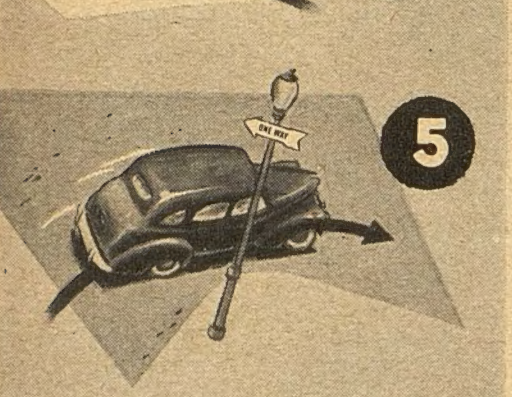
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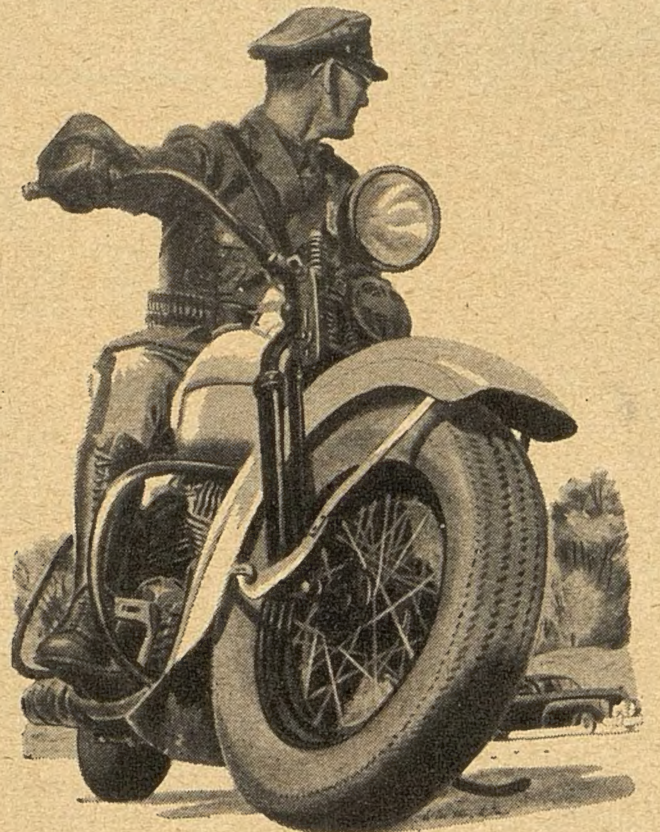
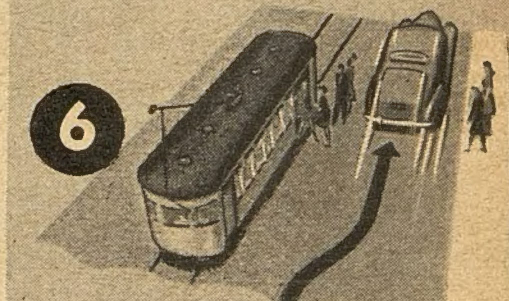


Here's what "the law" would do:

1. He gets a ticket—for pulling away from the curb without giving a hand signal.
2. Tell it to the judge, mister. Cutting over the center line to the inside of a curve is dangerous business.
3. Another ticket—for the driver of the sedan who is making an improper turn. He's making a right turn from the middle of the road, cutting off the truck.
4. Nothing wrong here. The chap who's been unlucky enough to have a flat tire has pulled off the road—and out of the way—to change it. That's a smart thing to do on a busy road or parkway.
5. Pull over, mister! That's a one-way street, and you're going the wrong way.
6. Guilty! He gets a ticket for passing a trolley that's discharging passengers.
7. If you catch this one, you've really got sharp eyes. There's nothing wrong with this driver filling up at the Ethyl pump (note the emblem). In fact, high quality gasoline in a properly tuned engine makes for a more responsive—therefore a safer—car. *But there's no license plate on the car*, and that's good for a summons the minute he pulls onto the public highway.
8. Ticket this driver for stopping on the cross walk! What's more, that skid mark from only one wheel indicates he's probably driving with defective brakes.
9. Passing on a hill—a dangerous practice that earns the driver of the coupe a summons.
10. Nothing wrong here. In fact, turning the wheels into the curb while parked on a hill is a good, sensible practice.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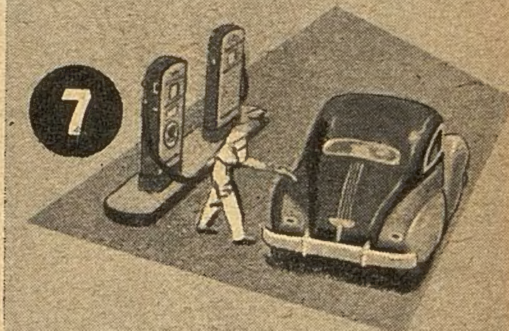
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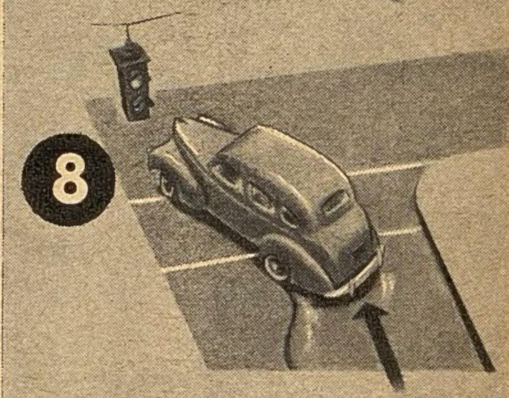
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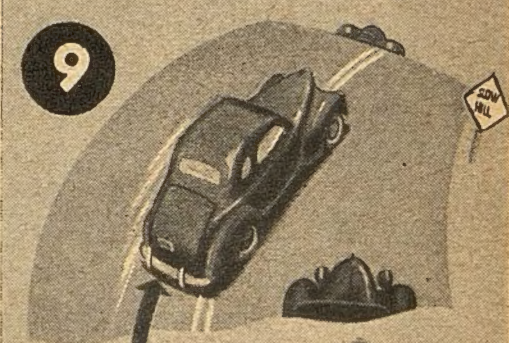
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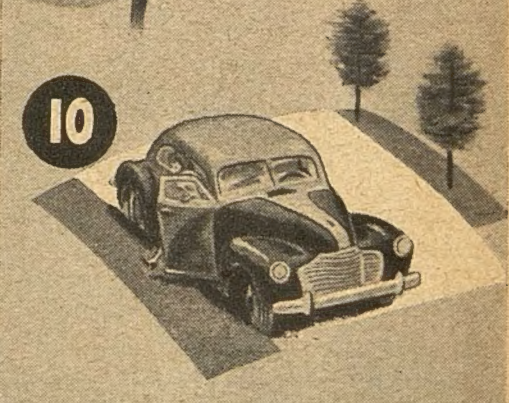
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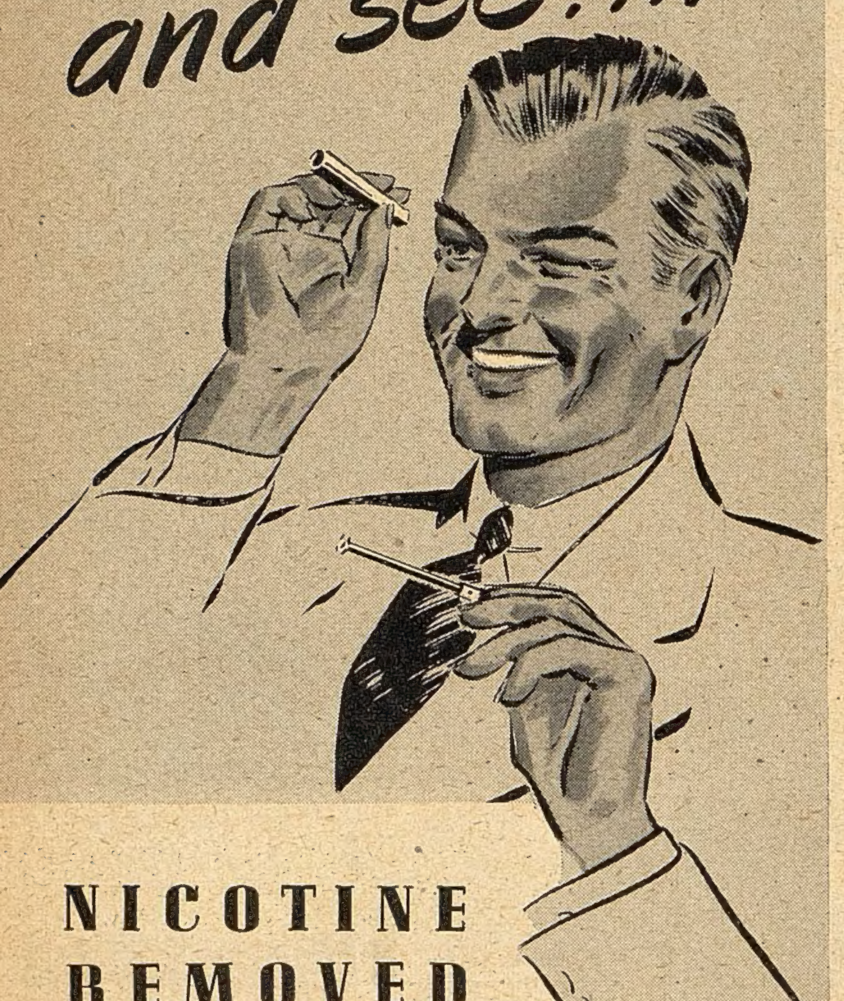
Look through and see....!



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★ ARTICLES

Government by Gobbledygook, *Rep. Howard W. Smith* .. 13
Pioneers of the Great Unknown, *Wendell Knowles* 16
Showdown in Pro Football, *Walter Byers* 18
Hairbreadth Harold, *Elizabeth Wilson* 22
Farms—$295 and Up, *Edwin Diehl* 30

★ STORIES

The Curse of the Pryors—Part I, *Frank Bonham* 14
Feather in the Wind—Short Short, *T. F. Healy* 20
This Is My Son, *Norma Bicknell Mansfield* 26
Miss Billings Makes a Sale, *Walter Brooks* 28

★ PICTURES

The Camera Eye 24

★ BOOK CONDENSATION

The Horizontal Man—*A mystery story by Helen Eustis—one of the most skillfully written of the year—abridged to a reading time of one evening* 31

★ FEATURES

Vox Pop 6
On the Beam 10
Books in Review 46
Crossword Puzzle 46
Clothes Clinic *P. B. Juster* 48
Veterans' Bulletin Board 52
Woman-Talk 58
Liberty Goes to the Movies 62
The Thropp Family 70

★ EDITORIAL

Is Boom and Bust Inevitable? *Paul Hunter* 74

Cover: Back to School
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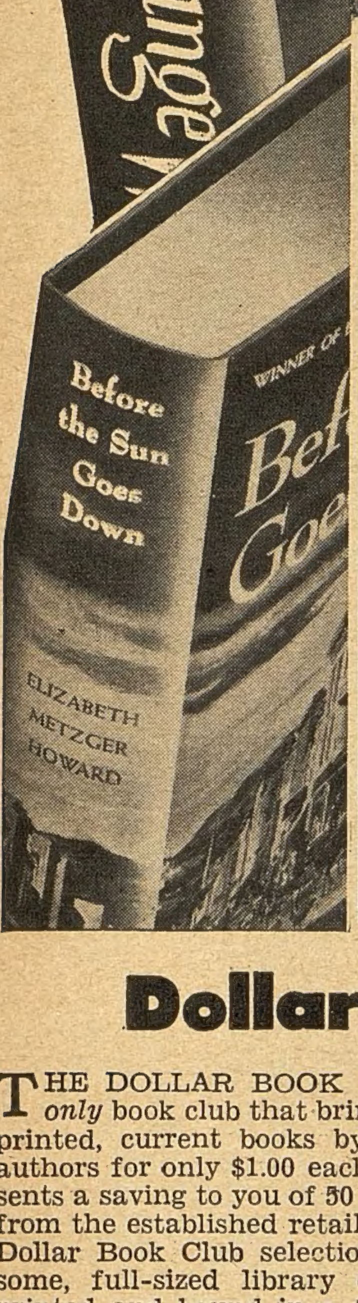

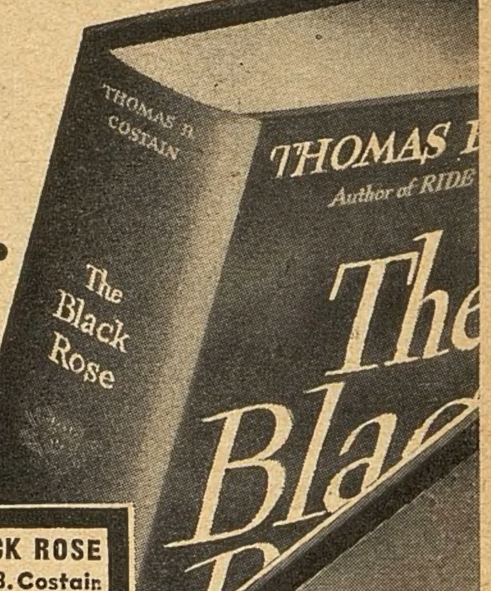

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BOOTS, BOOTS

Biloxi, Miss.—I am outraged at the rising price of shoes and am organizing a new type of buyer's strike. I and several friends are hardening our feet daily by going without shoes several hours at a stretch in preparation for the time our shoes wear out. While people may laugh at us, we've got the laugh on them as we don't have to throw our money away on footwear when our callouses are as thick as the soles of most $10 shoes.—*James Conyer.*

LOAN

Ansonia, Conn.—Congress and President Truman loaned Great Britain $3,750,000,000. I believe that the veterans of the U. S. A. should pay the same rate of interest when they borrow under the G.I. Bill of Rights that any foreign country gets. Vets, what are your opinions?—*Irwin H. McGowan.*

ERIN GO BRAGH

New York, N. Y.—Our organizing committee has instructed me to write and compliment you on the fine type of Irish Character stories you have been recently publishing in Liberty Magazine.

These are in decided contrast to the threadbare buncombe, the Paddy-and-the-pig claptrap, that perennially nauseates so many Americans of Irish birth or extraction.

Short shorts such as Window in Main Street (July 27) not only enhance your valued weekly, but do credit to the Irish race as well. The writers of such stories are artists.

It is refreshing to peruse a magazine which still believes that truth is stranger than fiction and with a gifted pen can provide entertainment at its best.—*Hugh Mullen.*

SHOWN

Birmingham, Ala.—Isn't Mr. Ickes a little late in Vox-Popping the question, "Show Me, Mr. Truman" (July 27)? I was under the impression that President Truman showed Harold L. Ickes (to the door) several months ago.—*John B. Atkins.*

WADS OF WOOL

Louisville, Ky.—In The Philanderer by Edwin Rutt (July 27) I have been unable to determine why the first line should be *Mr. Henry Woolworth Longfellow* instead of *Mr. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.* If this is not simply one of those "slips" will you kindly explain why the difference in the middle name? —*J. Carson Gary.*

Frederick, the hero, has been neglecting his studies.—Vox Pop Editor.

PRECARIOUS

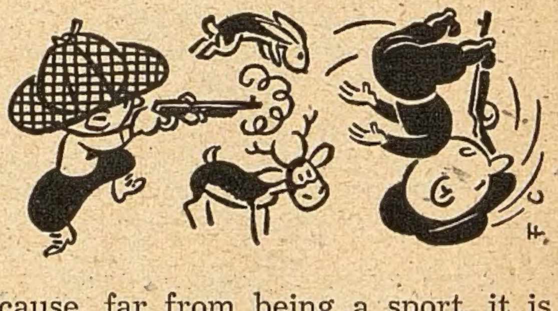
Detroit Lakes, Minn.—On page 19 of the August 3d issue appears a picture of President Truman *standing up* in a rowboat casting for salmon. In the same overloaded boat are four other apparently well fed politicians.

Even though it is only a pose, it shows a shocking disregard for the rules of safety or common sense. Is this an example of the precarious danger facing our ship of state?

Let's hope not!—*C. A. Baker.*

HUNTING

Valley Forge, Pa.—Fall will be here before we know it and as the leaves turn to gold so the minds of our legitimate murderers turn to hunting. Soon the annual toll in wild life will begin, and along with it the tragic accidents that occur every season in the field. Without getting sentimental over deer and rabbits, I would like to register a protest against this senseless butchery because, far from being a sport, it is an undignified, uncivilized practice retained centuries after hunting for food was replaced by agriculture and the raising of domesticated stock.—*William F. Bonham.*



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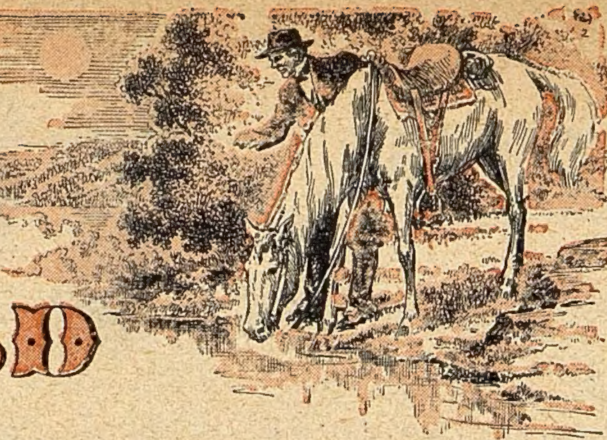

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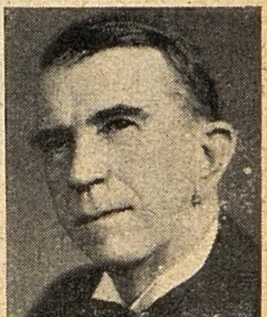
OUTDOOR GIRL

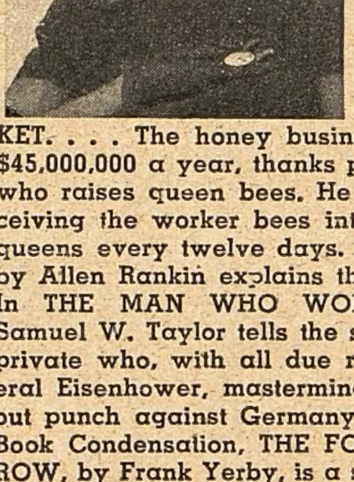
NORMA B. MANSFIELD is an outdoor girl who has been writing since she was twelve. She grew up in the ranch country of eastern Washington, went to the University of Michigan and, while still a student, married Robert S. Mansfield. For several years they traveled and only recently returned to her native state, where Mr. Mansfield teaches writing at the University of Washington. Her story, THIS IS MY SON, is on page 26. Incidentally, she has two of her own.

ENEMY OF GOBBLEDYGOOK



HOWARD W. SMITH has been in Congress since 1930. He is a graduate of Bethel Military Academy and the University of Virginia, where he studied law. Before becoming a Virginia judge he had a private law practice for eighteen years. During World War I he was assistant general counsel to the Alien Property Custodian. Dairying, farming, and banking have been intermittent occupations with him and he is still president of the Alexandria National Bank. He deftly diagnoses our bureaucratic ailments in GOVERNMENT BY GOBBLEDYGOOK on page 13.

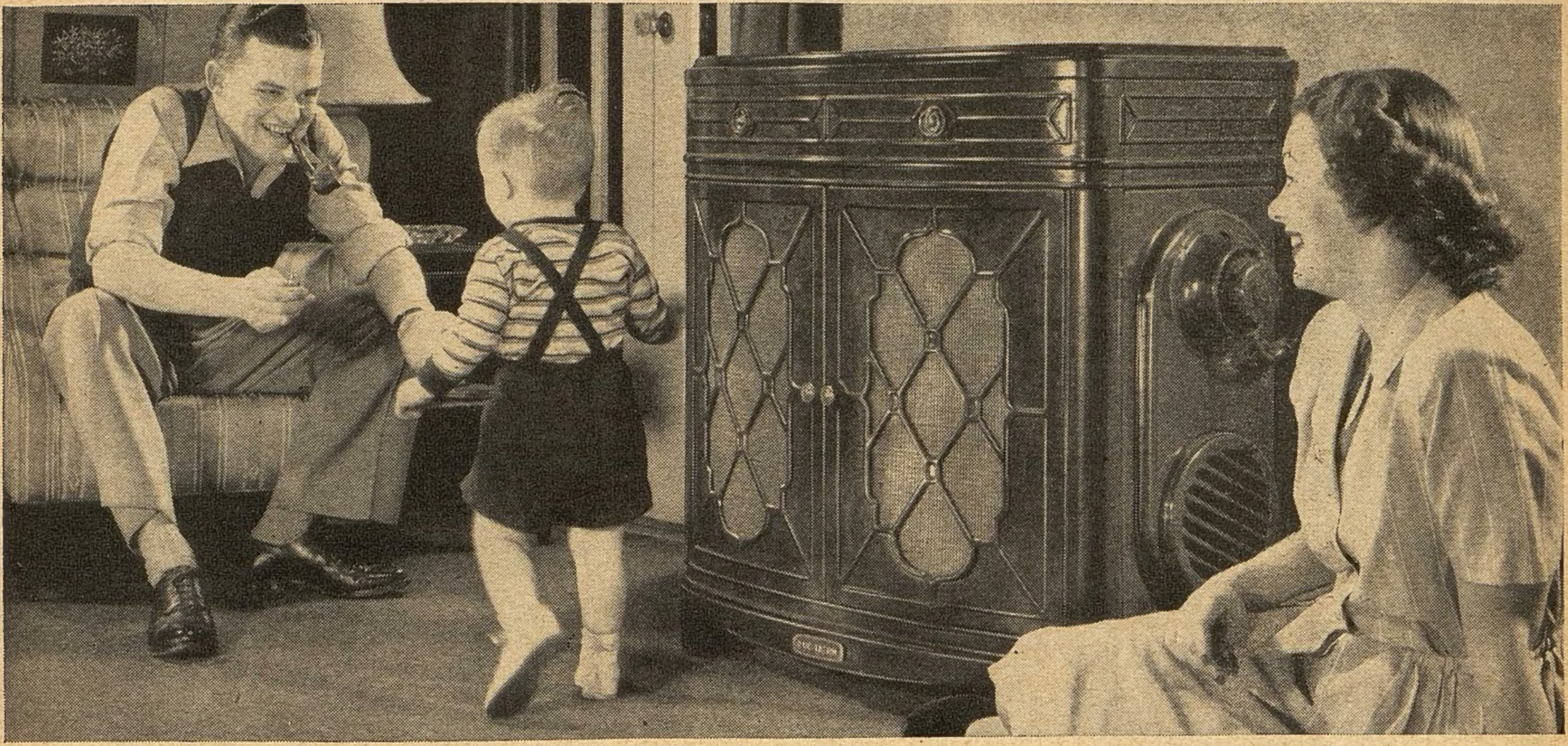
NEXT WEEK



HARVARD'S football coach, Dick Harlow, has some material for the coming season that may keep the Ivy League from withering on the vine. Will Cloney tells you how Congress helped him get it in HARVARD GOES TO MARKET. . . . The honey business runs up to $45,000,000 a year, thanks partly to a man who raises queen bees. He does it by deceiving the worker bees into making new queens every twelve days. QUEENMAKER by Allen Rankin explains the process. . . . In THE MAN WHO WON THE WAR, Samuel W. Taylor tells the story of a buck private who, with all due respect to General Eisenhower, masterminded the knockout punch against Germany. . . . Liberty's Book Condensation, THE FOXES OF HARROW, by Frank Yerby, is a swashbuckling, romantic tale of the Old South in which Stephen Fox becomes master of a great plantation.

No work—No dirt

TO KEEP WARM AS TOAST—



COMPLETELY NEW! Entirely different! Never before have there been fuel oil heaters so *truly beautiful* as Duo-Therm's exciting "furniture-style" Hepplewhite (above) and Chippendale Models. Inspired by famous "period" furniture designs, they *add new beauty* to your home while they give you *workless, dirtless heat!*

...and look at that thrilling new beauty!

Instead of lugging coal and ashes through your living room, picture doing *this:*

On the first cool day, you strike a match and start your beautiful new Duo-Therm Fuel Oil Space Heater.

Strike one match—that's all the work you do all winter long, except see that there's oil in the tank, because from then on *you tend the fire by turning a dial!*

Exclusive Dual Chamber Burner!

Duo-Therm's exclusive, patented Dual Chamber Burner turns cheap fuel oil into comforting waves of clean, safe, silent heat—with any degree of it you need right at your finger-tips!

Turn the handy control dial *down* and the *heat* gentles down. Turn the dial *up* and heat floods every nook and corner—*fast*—for Power-Air, Duo-Therm's exclusive, patented blower, *forces* it out. Distributes it *evenly*. Gives you welcome floor-to-ceiling warmth.

Power-Air Saves Up To 25%!

Because power-driven heat is the secret of lower cost, as well as greater comfort, Power-Air saves up to 25% on fuel!

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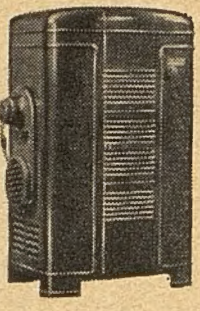
So why slave any longer over that messy old stove of yours? Let a Duo-Therm do the work!

Duo-Therm Gives You All This!

Duo-Therm heats your home with *amazing economy* because of its many *exclusive features.*

Duo-Therm *frees* you from the work and dirt of keeping warm because *you tend the fire by turning a dial.*

And Duo-Therm *adds new beauty* to your home because whether you choose one of the smartly designed Thrift or Royal Models (below) or one of the completely new furniture-style Period Models (above) you get a heater that's so *truly beautiful* it looks like a million dollars in your living room!



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ON THE BEAM

Correction: Pioneer with oxygen at high altitudes was Northwest Airlines . . . For news and photo coverage, fly a Piper Cub Coupé

BY WAYNE PARRISH

WHEN we said on this page several months ago that Western Air Lines was the only domestic airline providing oxygen outlets for the use of its passengers (on the Denver-Los Angeles service), we had a quick rejoinder from Joe Ferris, publicity director for Northwest Airlines which flies between New York and Seattle via the Twin Cities. It seems that we made a grave error in slighting Northwest.

Not only was Northwest the first domestic airline to install individual outlets for oxygen connections, but it was the first to use a new type of mask developed after months of study and experiments at Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota.

Northwest pioneered in the use of oxygen masks in high-altitude flights, and back in the early 1930s, in conjunction with doctors from Mayo Clinic, it began experiments that laid the foundation for the modern airline system. It conducted special high-altitude flights to both coasts to determine the reactions of air travelers.

Dr. W. R. Lovelace of Mayo Clinic, who in wartime, as a colonel in the A.A.F., made a 47,000-foot parachute jump, received national honor as did his associates at Mayo Clinic, in recognition of the work they carried on in co-operation with Northwest Airlines' flight personnel, engineers, and other experts.

All of Northwest's stewardesses are trained to carry out the oxygen operation, and the company has found that use of storage oxygen not only offsets the deficiency of oxygen at high altitudes or in emergencies, but is effective in the treatment of certain illnesses, including air sickness, and is soothing and relaxing to the passengers.

So, to Northwest Airlines, we pay due tribute for its high-altitude research and apologize for the oversight in our earlier article.

Reporters, Cub and Star

One midwestern newspaper has found the light airplane indispensable to its news and photographic coverage. The Indianapolis Times bought a Piper J4E Cub Coupé, 1941 model, for its aviation editor, Gene Dawson, and has scored many a news beat by sending him in his Cub direct to the scene of the occurrence.

Likable, energetic Dawson is now president of the Aviation Writers Association. Not only is he a good reporter, but he likes to fly.

Use of airplanes by newspapers is not new, but to our knowledge no other paper's use has had the same philosophy behind it. The usual type is a medium-range, medium-speed airplane requiring regular airports for take-off and landing. Dawson's plane is small and slow, but it can land (and does) almost anywhere. Hence the news beats.

Not long ago, for example, a farmer seven miles north of Rockport, Indiana, found the bodies of a man and a woman buried in his wheat field. It was a good story. The News scored a beat on it despite the fact that there was no airport near Rockport. Dawson and Bill Myers, the News pilot-photographer, were able to land in a twenty-acre field near the scene, get the pictures and story, and get right back to the office.

Emery M. Ellingson of the CAB tests the oxygen mask that is standard equipment on Northwest Airliners. With him are Dr. Lovelace of Mayo Clinic and Pilot Ollie Yates.

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It is a giant mechanical brain which remembers and passes along the letters and the numbers you select. It sets up traffic lights to hold the road open, and reports back if the telephone you want to reach is busy.

Dial has made great strides in recent years, but greater things are in store.

Some day, Bell Telephone Laboratories will make it possible for you to dial across the United States as simply and promptly as you dial a neighbor now.

All of this is part and parcel of the over-all Bell Laboratories program — to help the Bell System keep on giving you the world's finest telephone service.

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THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE

HARRIS & EWING PHOTO

Typical of the young men who govern by decree: Sam Lubell, recently a government economist; Donald Russell, assistant Secretary of State; Ed Prichard, onetime Secretary of Economic Stabilization; and Ben Cohen, State Department Counsellor.

Government by Gobbledygook* Gov. U S

L6017-12

Washington's new ruling class of starry-eyed young reformers insists on doing good even if it kills us, which it might. This congressman shows how we can stop 'em

BY REPRESENTATIVE HOWARD W. SMITH

FEDERAL officials are hired by such remote-control methods that it's no wonder the taxpayers are sometimes surprised at what they get. There are more than two million employees of the executive branch in continental United States who have their fingers in our private and business lives, and only one person out of the two million is elected. The sole elected official is the President.

Theoretically the President supervises the two million, but he can't possibly know what they are all doing. Congress has in the past defined their duties in broad outline, but except for investigations by a few special committees it has had little chance to watch them at work.

The result reminds one of the man in the nonsense novel who mounted his horse and galloped away rapidly in several different directions. There

(*Continued on page 64*)

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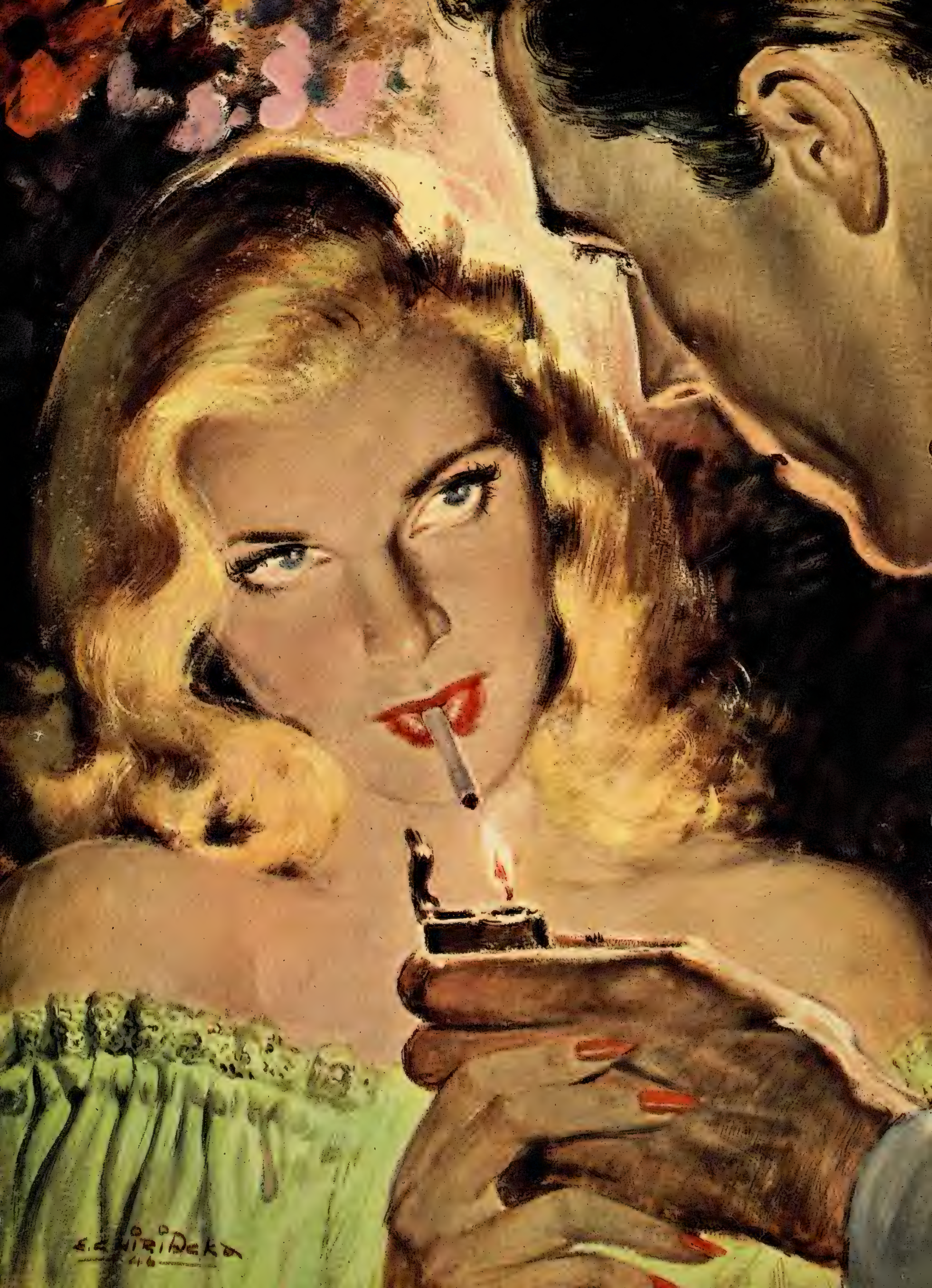
* The brilliantly expressive name recently given to the jargon of Washington bureaucracy.


E. CHIRIACKA
'46

L5811-85 L5714-400

THE CURSE of the PRYORS

There was more than met the eye on this Mexican ranch where the luck, it seemed, was always bad. And after a look at Kay, Scott knew this was one foreclosure deal that would take a little time

BY FRANK BONHAM

original returned to assembling ([illegible]) 10/9/46

SCOTT had learned about Mexico's narrow-gauge railways a long time ago. It was like riding a horse: If you went with the jolts, you suffered a lot less than if you sat stiffly and took the shocks the hard way. The vista reminded him of southern California. The train was snorting down a long broad plain locked in on all sides by blue mountain ranges.

Scott hadn't eaten lunch because he had expected to be at Hacienda San Marcos long before dinner. It wasn't his habit to eat the kind of food the Indians sold at railway stations. Bill Scott was no guidebook tourist. Talk to him about Mexico's laughing-eyed señoritas beckoning from bowers of flowers, and he would remark, "That reminds me of the time I had malaria in Manzanillo . . ."

He was in Mexico for the fifteenth time, and not because he wanted to be. If Woodworth had listened to him, he wouldn't have been here at all. Scott had said, "That guy Guzman doesn't know a coffee bean from an English walnut! Every cent you advance him is money thrown away."

But Guzman was already into Woodworth & Stone, Importers, for ten thousand pesos, and Woodworth had continued to carry him in the hope that his coffee *finca* would eventually begin to produce. But it hadn't, and Woodworth had been forced to foreclose.

Among other things, it was found that an American named Pryor, who operated a dairy ranch in the State of Puebla, owed Guzman eight thousand pesos.

So Bill Scott was sent down to see whether he could pay, and if he couldn't, to investigate the possibility of foreclosure. Scott collected his salary as the importing firm's Latin-American purchasing agent, but most of his activities involved post-mortems on defunct export firms.

The brown of the prairie gave way suddenly to the rich blue green of alfalfa. He discerned a small river winding southeast. A railroad sign flashed by: San Marcos. Bill Scott jumped for the bell cord. He disembarked before a small station of lava blocks. Across the tracks, behind a low stone wall, stood a massive hacienda. The stationmaster came out of the telegraph room.

"What thing?" he cried cordially. "All week Don Miguel expects you!" He pointed. *"Ya viene, Don Gonzalo!"*

The man called Don Gonzalo came loping from the hacienda with a jingle of coins, keys, and cartridge belt. He crossed the tracks, approaching Scott with his hand outstretched, a tall smiling man who squinted against the late sun. His eyes were as black as an Indian's.

"Very good afternoons!" he cried. "I am Don Gonzalo, the—*cómo se dice?*—managers. I carry the felicitations of Don Miguel Pryor. Don Miguel is in the canoe, inspecting the *milpas*. But the Señorita Pryor is expecting you."

Scott explained that he spoke Spanish. They crossed the tracks. The hacienda was a quarter-mile-long block of masonry with slotted towers at the corners and tile battlements along the roof. Through double doors they passed into the covered passageway dividing the two main sections of the building. The floor was cobbled; farther on, a patch of sunlight burned on a paved courtyard.

DON GONZALO opened a door on the left and they went into a chilly bedroom floored with red tile. Rattling keys, he marched on through two more rooms until he came to a third door. Here he stopped and confronted the American diffidently. "There is difficulty," he said, "with the negotiations?"

"There is difficulty."

The *gerente* chewed his mustache. "So fine a man; so poor a manager! If only others were governed by the heart rather than the purse!"

They went into a gloomy living room. The Señorita Pryor was curled up on a sofa, reading, in the deepening dusk, by a single oil lamp. A glow of charcoal embers illuminated the corner of the room, but the ceiling was lost in shadows.

"Doña Catalina," announced Don Gonzalo, "I have the supreme pleasure of presenting Señor Scott. Señor Scott, the Doña Catalina."

"Otherwise, Kay Pryor," the girl said.

SHE was slim and blonde and gave an impression of tallness, though she reached only to Scott's ear. She was as American as a billboard. Her hair was ash blonde and came to her shoulders. Her skirt was beige, without a crease over the hips; the lime-colored blouse was accented with a silver fawn. Scott felt as though his suit were suddenly too tight and his hands too big. She had him off balance with that cool gray-eyed glance.

"What do you drink, Mr. Scott?"

"Very little—on an empty stomach," he told her.

"We'll take care of that as soon as father comes in," Kay said.

Don Gonzalo departed to look for Pryor. In the warm gloom, broken only by the hearth light, they spoke randomly about politics and whatever else they had remotely in common. He found her as lovely and as indifferent as a Siamese cat. And yet his mind told him that there was the difference, here, between an unlighted fire and a banked one.

Kay said abruptly, "I really expected a whip and a black mustache, Mr. Scott."

"But they're so hot to travel in," Scott protested.

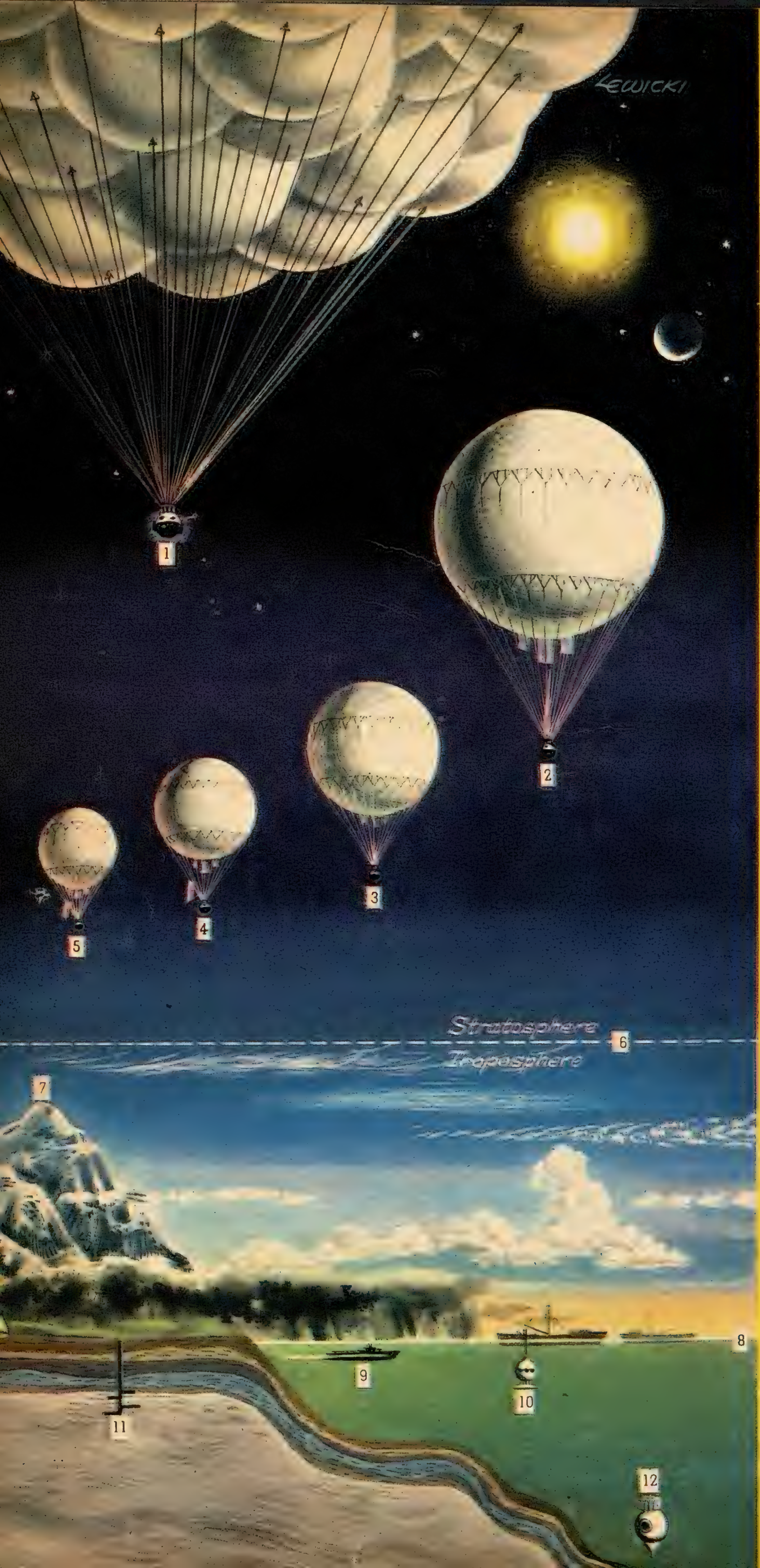
Kay looked at the fire. "So the ax is really going to fall."

Scott stirred uneasily. "Not necessarily. We don't want to go into dairy farming if we can help it, but we've got ten thousand pesos tied up here. And the way we get it from Guzman, your father can't pay two."

(*Continued on page 66*)

He found her as lovely and indifferent as a Siamese cat. And yet his mind told him that there was the difference, here, between an unlighted fire and a banked one.

ILLUSTRATED BY ERNEST CHIRIACKA



Twenty miles up, both sun and stars shine in a weird black sky. Below, the sky grows brighter. This is a scientifically exact painting of the strange unexplored spaces above and beneath us. There, it is hoped, many secrets of the universe will be uncovered by the Piccards, including much about atomic energy that still eludes us.

1. **Jean Piccard will try to reach this height—100,000 feet.**

L5819-300

2. Record set by Stevens and Anderson in 1935 – 72,395 feet.
3. Jean Piccard, 1934 – 57,579 feet.
4. Auguste Piccard, 1932 – 53,153 feet.
5. Auguste Piccard, 1931 – 51,458 feet.
6. Stratosphere begins—about 37,000 feet.
7. Everest, highest mountain peak—29,141 feet.
8. Sea level.
9. Submarine safety limit – 550 feet.
10. Beebe's bathysphere—3,028 feet.
11. One of the world's deepest mines, South Africa – 8,500 feet.
12. **Auguste Piccard will try for this depth—22,000 feet.**

Science

PIONEERS OF THE GREAT UNKNOWN

What's it like twenty miles above the earth and four miles beneath the surface of the ocean? To find out, the Piccard brothers will travel out of this world

By WENDELL KNOWLES

THE Piccards—the scientific twins already famous for their stratosphere balloon flights—are planning new record-breaking out-of-this-world trips. This time one of them wants to go up, the other down. And they both want to go farther in their respective directions than any man has ever gone before.

Jean Piccard, the twin whose yen is upward, and his wife hope to reach a height of twenty miles next June in a gondola tugged upward by 100 balloons.

Auguste Piccard, the first human to explore the stratosphere, wants to see what it looks like four miles down in the ocean. That is a mere three and a half miles deeper than anyone has ever submerged, and far below the 550 feet considered risky for submarines. His first descent is planned for next February in the Gulf of Guinea off the west coast of Africa. He hopes to stay down twelve hours, but will carry enough oxygen for twenty-four.

This up-and-down urge is nothing new to either of the Piccard brothers. They're pioneers—and by now, experts—in the business of rising and descending in pressurized spheres.

Auguste, who now designs physics instruments for a company in his native Switzerland, started it. He was teaching in Belgium when he got the urge to explore and study the stratosphere—the space where man had never gone—where the "death rays would get you if the lack of oxygen didn't." He invented the stratosphere balloon, which featured an airtight sphere instead of an open basket, and, even though he had a wife and four children, ventured in it up into the unknown.

He started from Augsburg, Germany, soared to 51,458 feet, and finally, eighteen hours after he left the earth, came down on an Austrian glacier—alive. He had proved it could be done. That was in 1931. The next year, starting this time from his own country, Switzerland, he rose to 53,153 feet, beating his own record by almost 2,000 feet. And for the first time he investigated in its own back yard the cosmic ray, the mysterious unknown which bombards the earth in the form of bulletlike molecule-busting particles, and is related—somewhat distantly but importantly—to the atomic bomb.

Then Auguste came to the United States on a lecture tour, telling about his exploration in the stratosphere, and his most enthusiastic convert was his own twin brother Jean, who up till then had been engrossed in a career as a professor of chemistry. Jean is now professor of aeronautical engineering at the University of Minnesota and a naturalized American citizen.

Jean made his initial stratosphere flight in 1934, starting from Henry Ford's airport at Dearborn, Michigan. He and Chicago-born, Bryn Mawr graduate Mrs. Piccard (his pilot) rose beyond Auguste's best mark, to a high of 57,579 feet.

(*Continued on page 71*)

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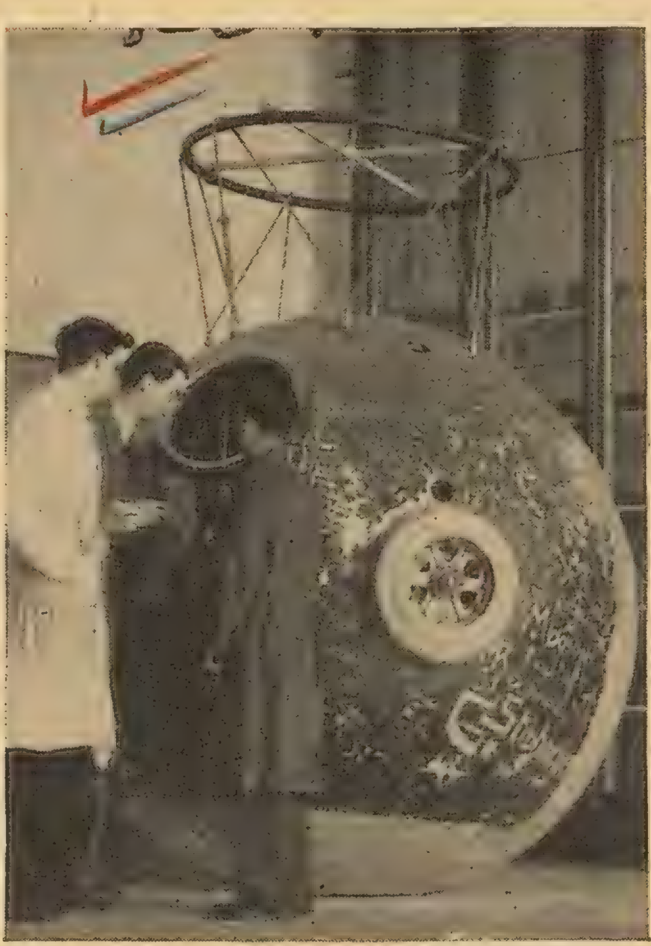
WIDE WORLD PHOTO

Auguste Piccard holds a crushed test model of a sphere that he'll dive four miles under the water early next year.



WIDE WORLD PHOTO

The spherical cabin in which Auguste Piccard and Max Cosyns explored the stratosphere at a height of 53,153 ft.

Free

Jean Piccard, whose yen is upward, gazes skyward where next June he hopes to reach a record 20 miles.

SPORTS L6003-12.21/L6004-21.

PRESS ASSOCIATION PHOTO

The play-for-pay boys who supply the thrills in the rough-and-ready game of professional football will receive fatter pay checks because the drawn-out player battle between leagues has increased salaries.

Showdown in Pro Football

The National Football League and the new All-America are at each other's throat in a fight for power that tops most gridiron scraps

BY

WALTER BYERS

THIS autumn not only heralds the approach of another football season, but the even more interesting spectacle of two professional grid circuits at each other's throats. A certain delirium seems to have gripped the owners of the National Football League and the All-America Conference.

As Timothy J. Mara, a man well acquainted with the problem of making a dollar, told his son, Jack, whom he had installed as president of the New York football Giants, "You can't make money! You'll be paying between twenty and twenty-three thousand dollars a game in salaries this season. If you have the greatest year in the history of the National Football League, you can only break even, with luck."

The same story is being told in practically every team office in the National Football League. An economic bugaboo has caught up with the N.F.L. owners. Their drawn-out player battle with the rival All-America has blown their payrolls into monsters which promise to gobble up the bulk of the gate receipts.

And the men who caused it all, the owners of the green All-America, who swore they would build a major-league empire of their own in 1946, are in the same financial cul-de-sac. They are making final preparations for their debut this fall as the first serious rival to the N.F.L.'s long-standing monopoly. They not only know they are going to lose money this fall, but they are faced with the possibility that for several seasons their books will be like the autumn leaves, flecked with red.

Although pro football is the fastest-growing big-time sport, it still is the youngest, excluding hockey, and as yet it has not attracted enough fans to sustain extensive enterprises operating in opposition. Even an attendance boom beyond all expectations during the next couple of years probably would not spin the turnstiles fast enough to catch up with the two leagues' million-dollar spending spree.

The one salvation for both groups is affiliation, following the pattern set by the American and National baseball leagues with an agreement on player bidding and schedule-making. But instead of co-operating, to bring player salaries back to normal and boost attendance by dovetailed schedules, both the National League and the All-America are buying their way into debt in an

PRESS ASSOCIATION PHOTO

Money talks on the pro gridiron as Dan Topping, wealthy owner of the N. Y. Yankees of the new All-America Conference, signs Frank Sinkwich, the most valuable player of the National League, to a three-year contract. Beauteous Mrs. Sinkwich looks pleased.

effort to outdo each other in their current three-front fight: (1) A skirmish for patronage in three cities where each league has a team—New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles; (2) all-out bidding for players; and (3) an expensive scramble for publicity.

Behind this seeming dollar daffiness is one of sport's most interesting stories. It is a tale of enmity, of the N.F.L. owners' belief that they were betrayed by a trusted friend when that friend organized the All-America Conference.

The A.-A. is an enigma to many fans and has only a few identifying personalities among its leaders, such as Commissioner James H. (Sleepy Jim) Crowley, the droopy-eyed halfback of Notre Dame's famed 1924 "Four Horsemen" team.

But Crowley, ex-Fordham coach and one of the banquet circuit's most talented raconteurs, is not the man who conceived the All-America. The heart and head of the entire organization is a bespectacled, benign gentleman—sports editor Arch Ward of the Chicago Tribune.

Ward is one of the most amazing figures in sports. His accomplishments border on the fabulous and his latest and probably greatest triumph is the conception, organization, and promotion of the All-America Football Conference. There still is doubt whether the All-America will succeed. But with the same unsmiling blunt confidence with which he considers all of his promotions—such as the annual All-Star football game, the Golden Gloves, and the All-Star bowling tournament — Ward unhesitatingly says "Yes!"

To understand that and his reason for organizing the conference you have to look at his past and his intimacy with the National Football League a few years ago.

Ward, another product of Knute Rockne's steady hand at Notre Dame, was the school's first publicity man—by choice of "the Rock" himself. He later was a desk man on the Tribune, taking over as sports editor to become one of the greatest in the paper's history and also one of the sports world's leading promoters. His springboard, and the All-America's too, has been the paper itself. As one critic remarked, "Anybody could become a great promoter with a million people buying his releases every day." And it is true the announcement of the A.-A.'s birth, as well as subsequent important proclamations, was first headlined in the Tribune. The information was spread throughout the country by the simple procedure of sending carbon copies of the Tribune's story to the three press services in Chicago.

The Tribune's broad circulation sweep through the Midwest made Ward a man the N.F.L. spent time in wooing. He was one of the National League's great friends. So when the N.F.L. was looking for a commissioner in 1939, the owners settled on Arch and offered him a five-year contract at $20,000 a year. He rejected it. The offer, this time a ten-year pact with an annual salary of $25,000, was renewed in 1940 and he accepted it. Yet ten days later, on Christmas Eve, he rejected the post a second time, explaining that the Tribune had offered him a new contract which he couldn't refuse.

When the N.F.L. owners came back a third time to ask for help in choosing a commissioner, Arch advised them to cull the collegiate ranks for an athletic director who had made his mark in sports administration at one of the leading universities.

The owners picked three men, including Elmer Layden, then athletic director and head football coach at Notre Dame. Ward says he did not suggest Layden, but when the owners asked about the Fighting Irish coach he went all out in pushing him. The result was that Layden was selected and signed a five-year pact at $20,000 a year.

But the National League lost its friend Ward, and later lost Layden, two major reasons why the big league has a rival today. It was in

(*Continued on page 54*)

ACME PHOTO

The moguls of the National Football League powwow in New York to map strategy. L. to r. are Don Hutson, Green Bay Packers; George Halas, Chicago Bears; Gus Dorias, Detroit Lions; Earle Neall, Philly Eagles; Dr. Jock Sutherland, Pittsburgh Pirates.

ILLUSTRATED BY LAWRENCE BUTCHER

Liberty's
SHORT SHORT
STORY

FEATHER IN THE WIND

L5710 - 350

It wasn't as though the engineer hadn't been warned not to build his power plant in the enchanted Grove of the Green Bird

BY T. F. HEALY

IT came as a blow to the neighbors when officials in the capital decided to build a substation half a mile away from our village, in their program to electrify the country, postponed during the global war.

It was not that they disliked the new kind of lighting. The trouble was that the site selected for the station was in a grove of red yew trees under a hill by the river, and it was so sacred to the Little People that nobody would think of cutting down even a twig in that particular place. It was called the Grove of the Green Bird, because tradition had it that a green bird was sleeping there who would wake and fly over the land on the day when true peace came to the world.

So when they saw the surveyors go right into the grove, it caused grave concern. Nobody really knew what to do about it.

Nobody knew, that is, until Maeve Mulholland heard about it. Maeve was the wise woman of the barony, and had the power on her, they said. She saw signs and portents in everything. She knew, too, the real meaning of the ancient prophecies of the land as they had been handed down through the generations; and she was so wise, they said, that she could tell by the smoke from a chimney how many were ill in a house and how many were well in it. More, she could invoke the Little People, and if so minded could utter a malediction in Gaelic that would gap a hatchet, split a tree, or wither a brier bush in its blooming.

Everyone will be long forgetting the day she met the superintendent on the main street as he came out of the tavern. He was also going to act as the chief engineer. He was from the capital, but had been educated abroad and had worked in foreign lands for several years.

“You're building your station in the wrong place,” said Maeve, standing before him.

“Best possible site for it,” he answered briskly.

“Do you know 'tis sacred to a principality of the hierarchy of the Little People? The *leprechauns,* the *cluricaunes,* the *Goncannahs,* the *Dullahans,* the—”

He laughed. “Fiddlesticks on your Little People!”

“And, what is more,” went on Maeve, “in it the Little People guard the Green Bird of *Aengus Oge,* sleeping there from time out of mind ever since the winged days of our country. And that bird will arise one day, the day when true peace and good will come to men, with wings alate and feathers shining greener than any green on land or sea, and a hosting of other birds will follow him flying over the land and many lands, and the whir of their wings will make a music in men's ways the like of which they never heard before, and the flashing of their feathers will be a brightness above us—”

“Stuff and nonsense,” broke in the superintendent. “Do you expect me to believe in all that junk?”

“Junk!” Maeve stopped short. A crowd began to gather, and Malachi Michael O'Hanrahan heard the commotion too and came by.

“Malachi Michael,” said Maeve, “I speak to you as our patriarch. This man misdoubts me about the grove. Talk to him. Do your good endeavors for the Little People, and yourself to be standing up for us.”

MALACHI MICHAEL scratched his head. “'Tis a predicament you give me, Maeve,” he said. “The station is a good thing, I'm thinking, and the blessed boon of lights for us.”

“The light of the sun and moon who were the lordly companions of our fathers of old is better,” said Maeve, “and the light of other days, too, to guide us. And this ma—machinery, they say, will whir night and day but not with the whir of wings is it.”

“Good Lord!” shouted the superintendent. “What a situation!”

“The Little People will understand, Maeve,” said Malachi Michael kindly, “when they know the necessity.”

“But their trees, Malachi Michael! Which side are you on?”

“On both sides, I suppose.”

“Both sides!” said Maeve.

“Both sides!” said the superintendent. “What tommyrot!”

“You're a most arrogant man,” Maeve said to him, “and yourself without respect or reverence for the—” She paused and looked at the ground as if trying to conjure visions from the bowels of the earth.

“What crazy Irish superstition!” The superintendent shook his chartbook at the crowd.

“Your attitude is wrong,” said Malachi Michael, “'Tis with a reverence a man should cut down any sort of a tree, and we'd appreciate it if you cut down only what is necessary, as few as possible. And 'tis our right to be superstitious, if that's what you want to call it, and I was never such a knave myself as to believe only what I can see with my own two eyes, for there are more things in heaven and earth, as the poet said, than are dreamt of in your philosophy, and—”

“Poetry! Legends!” interrupted the superintendent.

“A legend,” said Malachi Michael, “may be wiser than a book—such a book as you have in your hand, for while one man writes a book, it takes many men to make a legend—”

“I suppose you believe, too, in all that rot about the Green Bird?”

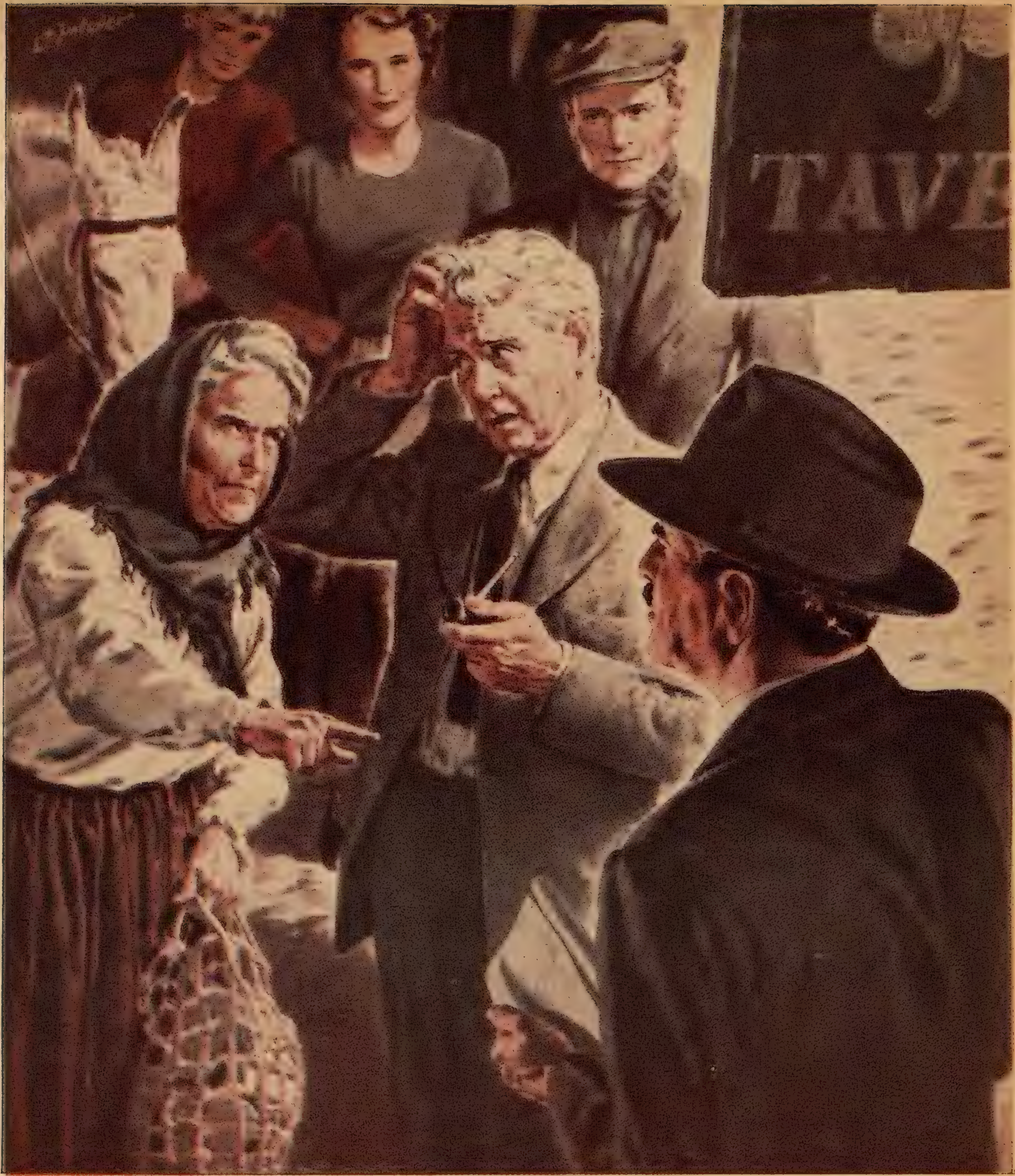
Malachi Michael smiled. “In that, as in other things,” he replied, “the people's opinion is enough for me.”

The superintendent threw up his hands. He snapped his fingers. “A fig for your Green Bird and your Little People! A pox on them all! Why, you're out of this world, all of you. I feel now like having the whole bloody grove razed to knock some sense into you, to show how crazy you are.”

He strode away and his laughter was heard down the street. The crowd broke up. Maeve went away quietly, muttering to herself. Everybody felt sorry for her because the superintendent had laughed at her in scorn.

THE work went on. A swath of the trees was cut down to make for a great clearing, and many thought that more were felled than was necessary. More trouble came when local help was called in for the building. This brought Maeve out again, to stand of mornings at the entrance and fix each worker with a cold Medusal eye. Some workers quit, and help had to be hired from outside localities. It took Malachi Michael to persuade Maeve to go back to her cottage and stay there.

The station was finished at last, and the generators installed. Everybody awaited the day for the lights to go on. That day was a stormy one. A big wind blew, bending back the golden gorse bushes, whistling under the eaves of the houses, soughing and swirling along the street, and catching and carrying leaves and loose things.



"The station is a good thing, I'm thinking," said Malachi Michael. "The light of the sun and moon is better," said Maeve.

The superintendent left the tavern to test the works himself first, as he said, bucking the wind on his way to the station. He strode up the five steps to the door, when on the top step he was seen to stop suddenly to push something from before his face, but in doing it he lost his balance and fell backward, to lie groaning on the ground. People ran to him, and Malachi Michael went too.

"Are you hurted?" asked Malachi Michael, bending over him.

"Can't move," said the superintendent. "Hip broken, I think. Get a stretcher. The wind blew this thing in my eyes, this d—" He held it up in his hand, and Malachi Michael took it from him and looked at it too.

"This poor man is not fated to turn on the lights," said Malachi Michael. "Go get the assistant to do it, someone. Bad accident, and accidents will happen to any man. But 'tis the queer thing now this little object caused it, and is just a feather in the wind, as you'd say. I'll be showing it to Maeve. She'll be hearing the music of forgotten wings."

There was a silence about him now, and everybody greatly wondered, because what Malachi Michael held in his hand as the cause of it was a long wing feather, and it seemed to most, even in the gathering gloom, that its color was very green.

THE END

HAIRBREADTH HAROLD

Harold Lloyd is in pictures again, backed by $2,000,000 of smart money that says he's still one of the funniest fellows on earth

By ELIZABETH WILSON

Seeing Harold Lloyd hanging by a foot, high over Manhattan, will bring nostalgia to older movie fans. It's a scene from the new Lloyd picture, The Sin of Harold Diddlebock, based on the Lloyd formula of giving audiences "a comedy of terrors."

PRESTON STURGES and Howard Hughes have bet $2,000,000 that Harold Lloyd is still a very funny fellow. And it looks as though they've hit the jackpot with the new Harold Lloyd picture, The Sin of Harold Diddlebock, which is due for release this fall.

Everybody over twenty will remember Harold Lloyd, the man who ran a pair of lensless spectacles, instead of the customary shoestring, into one of Hollywood's biggest fortunes.

Here's how, at fifty-three, Lloyd happens to be making a comeback.

Sturges, master-minding an independent production company backed by Hughes' millions, sought out Lloyd with the idea of having him direct a movie he had in mind called The Sin of Hilda Diddlebock. During their discussion, he asked Lloyd if he ever considered "returning" to the screen.

"I've never left the screen. I just haven't found the right story," Lloyd retorted.

"So?" said Sturges. "Instead of a girl in Diddlebock, we'll switch the character to a man—"

It is The Freshman, one of his biggest successes, that brings Lloyd back to life in The Sin of Harold Diddlebock. Real footage from the last reel of that picture, made in 1922, furnishes the opening action for Diddlebock. Lloyd, as a water boy in The Freshman, manages to get into the Big Game and, by accident, scores the winning touchdown. Hysterical fans carry the hero from the field. Diddlebock begins with Harold in the college locker receiving offers from the worshiping alumni.

"The problem," says Harold Lloyd, "was to re-establish the character—that is, the character I played on the screen. Preston wanted to make a certain lesson in his picture. All of his pictures from The Great McGinty down to this one have had a definite moral point. In this one he is fighting against the smugness that comes with security. So our Diddlebock story tells what happens to a football hero who is given a job by an admiring alumnus. Diddlebock settles down in his little groove and disaster strikes."

Sturges calls it a picture against security. Diddlebock stopped thinking, he says, and that was his sin, for when he ceased to think, he lost his job. That depressed him, and because he was depressed he took his first drink. That led to more trouble, and the only way out was to begin thinking again. So after twenty-four years Diddlebock began to use his brain again and became a success.

To make matching shots Lloyd surprised everyone, even Sturges, by getting made up exactly as he was in the last reel of The Freshman. "All I had to do," he says proudly, "was take off a little weight." (One of the Lloyd idiosyncrasies is that he will never weigh himself.)

IT amounted to a little more than that, but not much more. Wally Westmore, make-up expert, used the light make-up that was in vogue in 1922, and which is five shades lighter than the make-up in use today. A little adhesive tape on the temples, a little more hair where it was beginning to recede, a little oil and grease pencil to darken it, and that was all.

"Not many actors could match shots of themselves taken twenty-four years ago," says Westmore. "Harold has kept himself in excellent physical condition."

Lloyd was amused, and pleased, by an incident that happened on the set while he was nervously waiting to do his first scene. An extra remarked in a friendly fashion, "You certainly look like him, son."

"Yes," said Lloyd, "I guess I do."

"You'll enjoy working with him."

"Yes, I suppose I will," said Lloyd, thinking the man was talking about Sturges.

"And, young man," continued the extra in a fatherly manner, "I understand that Mr. Lloyd is planning to make several pictures. You can probably be his stand-in for a long time."

The climax of Diddlebock, of course, is when Lloyd, with his specs taped on, and Jackie the lion do their stuff atop a skyscraper. At first a double was used for this rugged scene. Lloyd, who never used a double in his comedies, writhed uneasily as he watched another fellow doing his stunt. Never one to pass up an opportunity for a fine bit of needling, Sturges whispered annoyingly in Lloyd's ear, "Isn't it a pity, Harold, you aren't twenty years younger!"

Soon afterward the double pocketed his full salary and went home.

STAFF PHOTO

PHOTO BY JACK ALBIN

One of Hollywood's richest men, Lloyd's one big splash is his 35-acre estate, most expensive in Beverly Hills. The Lloyd family (l. to r.)—Gloria, 21; Harold; Mrs. Lloyd, and Peggy, 20—listen to Harold, Jr., 15, talking airplanes, his favorite subject.

Then the snarling Jackie pussy-footed across the narrow twelve-story ledge, and Lloyd himself dangled happily from the ten-foot chain.

Lloyd always believed in giving audiences their money's worth in laughs and chills. It was good formula in the days of his three-reeler, Never Weaken, and it's just as good a formula today.

THE comedian was born in the little town of Burchard, Nebraska. His father, J. Darsie Lloyd, was a salesman, and the family moved frequently around Nebraska, living in such places as Beatrice, Pawnee City, and Omaha.

Diddlebock (Lloyd) invades the banker's office with Jackie the lion. There is everything in The Sin of Harold Diddlebock but the good old custard pie. People want action, says Lloyd, and judging by this typical Lloyd scene, they get it.

Early enthusiasm for the theater led him to try out for the role of Little Abe in a production of Tess of the D'Urbervilles which was being performed by the Burwood stock company. For the next eight years he toured the Middle West in a number of popular plays. When the elder Lloyd received $2,000 as judgment in an accident case, the family decided to give young Lloyd some real theatrical training. They moved to San Diego, California, where John Lane Connor, who had given Harold a crack at Little Abe, was running a dramatic school.

Young Lloyd attended high school, helped his father in his combination restaurant and billiard parlor, studied with Connor, painted scenery and swept floors. He made his first acquaintance with motion pictures when he condescended to play an Indian, for which he got two dollars, for the Edison Company on location in San Diego's Balboa Park.

"Full of thespic ardor," says Lloyd, "I spurned the upstart movie industry. I wanted to tread the boards. I wasn't interested in Hollywood. Unfortunately, I discovered later that Hollywood wasn't interested in me either."

This came about a few years later, after Lloyd had toured the West Coast in stock. The theatrical business was in one of its slumps, so he decided to pick up some of that easy movie money until audiences had regained their senses and again appreciated the finer things of life.

"The studio cops," he says, "not only didn't recognize me, but they wouldn't let me inside the studios. I didn't exactly starve, but I did do a spot of suffering for my art. I often wished I were back in San Diego—where father still had a restaurant."

Finally he noticed that extras in grease paint were allowed to leave

(Continued on page 73)

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The Camera Eye

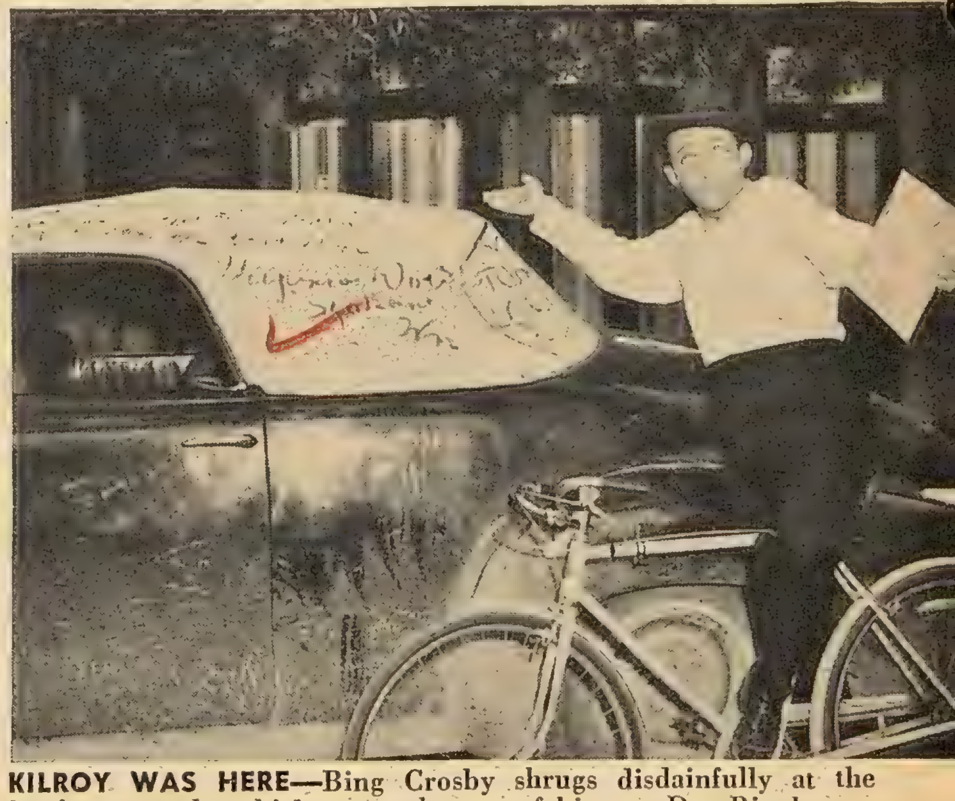
Few events on Earth and few people, great or merely odd, escape the camera's nimble probing

OUR UNDERGROUND FUTURE?—People whose hobby is exploring caves are called Speleologists. A family of Speleologists, the Wilsons, explore the Strickland cavern at Portland, Conn. Speleologists find their hobby taking on vital importance with the war department directing the national Speleologist society to come up with 50,000 square feet of caverns as protection against atom bombs.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO

WHAT PRICE DEMOCRACY?—The constitution says that all men are equal. Eugene Talmadge says they aren't—yet under the constitution he was elected to a fourth term as Georgia's Governor.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO



KILROY WAS HERE—Bing Crosby shrugs disdainfully at the fans' autographs which cover the top of his car. Der Bingle was observed afterwards gunning for a fellow by the name of Hope.

WIDE WORLD PHOTO

L6067-12,24 L6068-24.48

DUMBO—This elephant was part of the first cargo of animals for delivery to the London Zoo since the war. It's being hoisted from The City of Lille at the London docks.

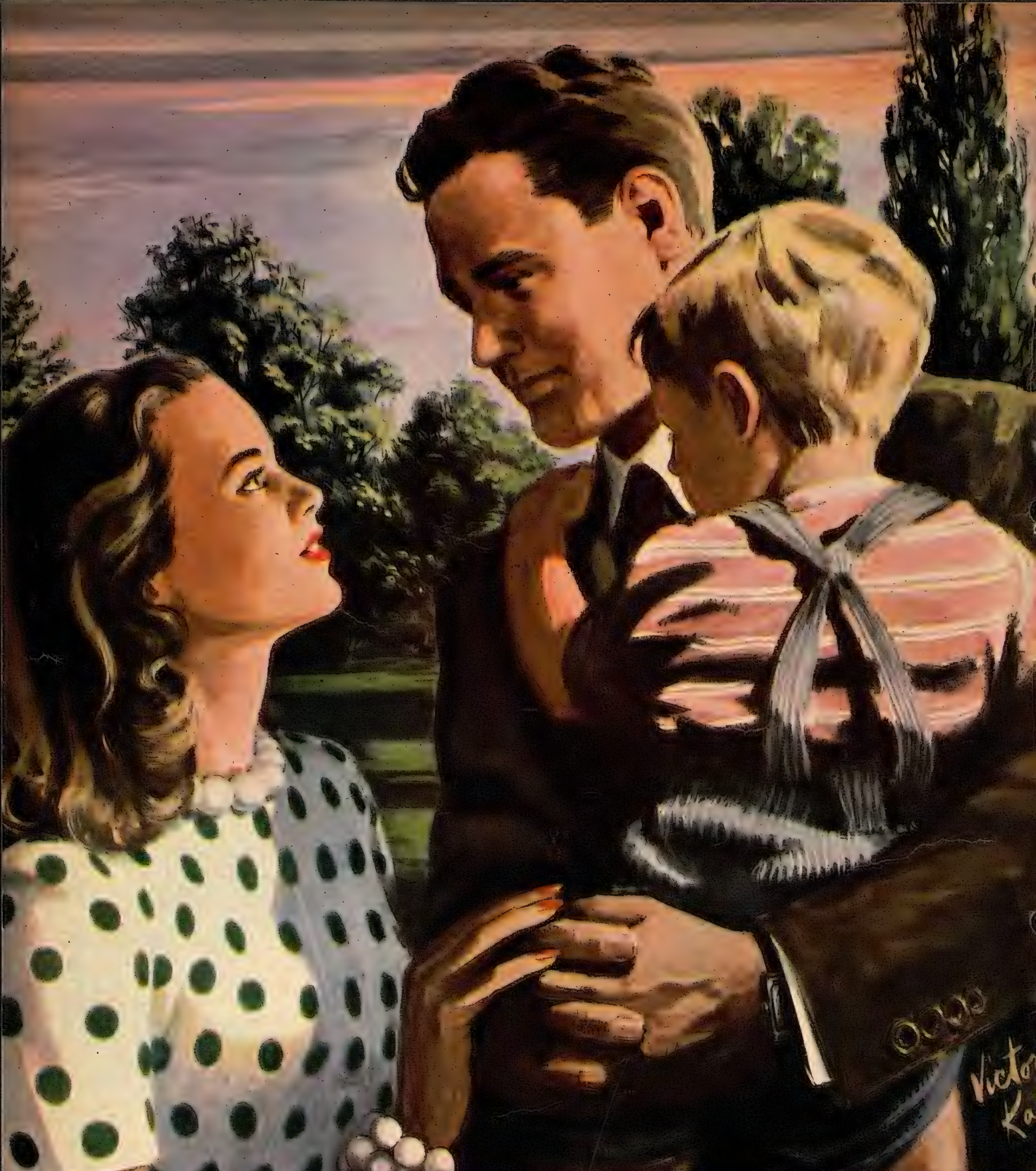
PRESS ASSOCIATION PHOTO

AERIAL "COWBOY"—That old fashioned critter the "hoss" seems doomed as this Wyoming cowboy rounds up a herd of antelope from an air-borne "buckeroo."

ACME PHOTO

PAULA DREW — was headed for fame as an opera star when signed by the films. Paula is another beautiful exception to the rule that opera stars are hefty.

ACME PHOTO



The boy was warm to his arms, warm and wriggling, and dearer than he'd known. "This is Tim," Bert said. "This is my son."

original picture sold to J. Martin ([illegible]) 10/9/46

In the desperate dark hours before he shipped over, Bert had met a girl. Now there was a son—and another girl

BY NORMA BICKNELL MANSFIELD

L5713-350

THIS IS MY SON

ILLUSTRATED BY VICTOR KALIN

HE had scarcely noticed her at first. She had been one of the few roomers who, like Bert, found it cheaper and easier to eat here, where they lived, at Mrs. Crampton's. Mrs. Crampton was big and untidy and noisy. She did most of the talking at mealtimes, and that was all right with Bert. Three years in the South Pacific hadn't left him much to talk about except with men who had been where he had been.

This girl was small, and she moved quietly. Bert had been at Mrs. Crampton's a week before he noticed she was pretty.

He knew that her name was Sara and that she clerked downtown in one of the big department stores. That was why he thought of asking her where to shop for the things his son needed.

"There's this baby," Bert began. He was big, and his civilian clothes made him feel gawky and overdressed. "There's this baby," he said again. "He needs clothes, and I thought maybe you could tell me the best store to go to."

It hurt him to speak of Tim as though he weren't his own, but there were things Bert had to work out in his mind before he claimed him. He meant to claim him. No son of his would go through life unnamed, no matter what his beginnings, and Bert was willing, for himself, to accept what blame attached to him. He meant to lie about Tim, to save the boy embarrassment as he grew older, but it had to be a good lie, a solid, unshakable lie, one Tim himself couldn't undermine with questions later. A good lie must be based on truth. Bert had to know first if Tim's mother, Gina, had meant to abandon him. Before he could discover that, he must find Gina.

He had met her in San Francisco, two weeks before he had been shipped out, three years ago, at a party he hadn't wanted to attend. She had been round and soft and responsive, and for a little while it had not seemed to matter that he might be going out to death.

Queer how the wash of three years' time could dim a memory. He had come back, scarcely remembering how she'd looked, knowing that death no longer frightened him. Perhaps it was his clearer understanding of both life and death that had dimmed Gina's reality and her significance for him. He had looked for Gina where she had said she would be waiting, in a part of town which, even three years ago, had looked shabby to his farmer eyes. It had looked shabbier on his returning.

"She ain't been here this whole past year," the woman at the door told him, answering his knock. "She left the kid, and said she'd be back, and that's all she said."

"The kid?"

"That's him," the woman said, and Bert saw the toddler weaving shakily toward him. "It's been some trouble feeding him," she went on, but Bert could see she'd given him care and full affection. He clutched her skirt and babbled up at her. She reached down wearily and swung him up into her arms. "Got six kids of my own," she said. "Keeps me busy, but they's always room for more, seems like." She turned her tired glance from the child to Bert. "Gina ain't no good," she said. "She never was."

BERT thought, with instinctive justice. It took two of us to bring this child into this world.

"Tim looks like you," the woman said. "Gina said the father was a big blond brown-eyed farmer, name of Bert."

"That's me," Bert said.

The woman, whose name was Mrs. Wooten, said he'd better leave the boy with her till he got settled.

"That way you can kind of prepare folks to expect you to bring home a son," she said.

"I've got a little money saved," he said. "I'll pay you for his keep." He paid her, too, for having kept the child.

"You staying on here, in town?"

"I had my electrician's card," he said. "I can get it again." He couldn't take Tim home to the farm, not until he had talked with Gina.

He took a room at Mrs. Crampton's because it wasn't far from there to Tim. Mrs. Crampton's boardinghouse sat on the hill, and the city's respectability enclosed it. Below it, the shabby houses sprawled down the hillside, but there was a playground for children, and a small forgotten park. Tim played out of doors most of the time. Fog didn't bother him, nor the rain. He was a healthy child. "He needs some clothes," Mrs. Wooten had said.

"How old a baby is he?" Sara asked. Bert told her. "Big for his age?" Sara said.

"I don't know," Bert said. "He's healthy."

Sara looked down at her hands.

"I'd be glad to do the shopping for you," she said, "but I'd probably better see him first, to make sure of his size."

It struck Bert strange that he was set immediately against Sara's seeing the boy.

"I'll get his measurements," he said. But later, in his room, he asked himself what difference it made whether Sara saw Tim or not. Not finding Gina, it would still be years before he wanted a girl to love again. What matter would it make for Sara to see the boy, even to recognize him as Bert's son? He didn't know, but he went alone to get Tim's measurements, although he had already indicated to Sara the boy lived on the shabby side of the hill.

Sara took an afternoon off, and Bert did too, and they went to Piper's, clear out at the edge of the city. The store was big and busy, bargain-placarded. Bert would have been hopelessly intimidated, but Sara took on proportion. The top of her head came just to his shoulder, and she wore a small brown cap, her hair shiny as brown silk around it. In spite of the crowds and Bert's own ducking and dodging, the neat brown head was always near his shoulder.

HUB HOLST picked her out at once the night he came home with Bert for dinner. Hub had been out there on Okinawa, and he had been here in San Francisco three years before. They had gone out together, Bert and Hub. Their memories were equal. Bert saw him in the bus, coming home, and Hub said sure he'd come to dinner. He didn't have anything better to do.

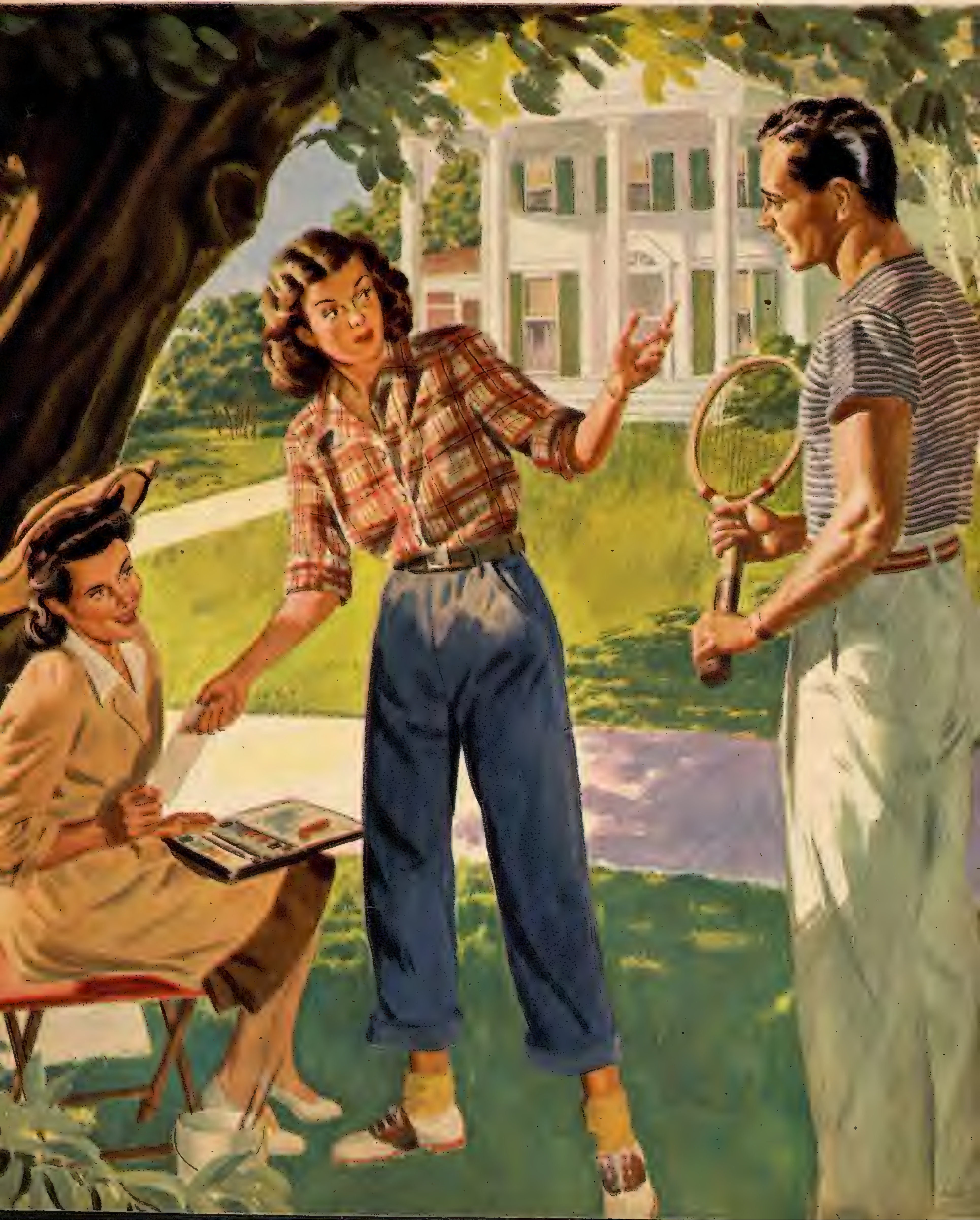
He saw Sara at once, across the small dining room.

"Some squab," Hub said. "Like to meet her."

Bert decided he could talk to Hub about Tim. Hub might be able to give him a lead on Gina. Hub had known her.

(Continued on page 48)

What started to be a painting of Mr. Allen's house took on shapes and colors which the artist could never have intended. Or could she?



MISS BILLINGS Makes a Sale

BY WALTER BROOKS

ILLUSTRATED BY MARTIN GULSER

L5709-350

JANE BILLINGS was overweight and wore floppy-looking clothes and large hats. She was old enough to do just what she wanted to, which was to travel around in an old car and paint water colors of old Colonial houses.

She would drive into a town and pick out the likeliest-looking house and then she would set up her easel as close as possible to the front gate. Usually after a bit the owner or his wife would come out.

Miss Billings would say I hope you don't mind my making a sketch of your lovely house. Usually the owner would say No of course not and Miss Billings would go on to talk of the wonderful proportions and the picturesque setting and the owner would stay breathing down Miss Billings' neck and lapping up her praise of his property.

Then the owner would ask What do you do with these pictures? or Do you ever sell your paintings? Miss Billings would say Oh dear no! So the owner was off his guard and before he knew it he was trying to persuade Miss Billings to sell the picture. After a suitable interval Miss Billings would yield and name a price.

Now Miss Billings did not do this for a living. Her father had left her four or five thousand a year. So she traveled around and painted for fun. And her fun usually involved telling a lot of elaborate lies.

Well one morning Miss Billings set up her easel in front of a house on the outskirts of a town called Silchester. The house was a square white affair with a high pillared portico. It had a gloomy romantic air that appealed to her. She propped her paintbox against the post that supported the mailbox and worked away happily.

By and by a glittering coupé rolled down the drive and stopped opposite her. The man who got out was perhaps fifty, thin-lipped correct and conservative. Miss Billings thought probably a banker.

As he reached into the mailbox and took out several letters she said Good Morning—I hope you don't mind my making a sketch of your lovely house? He made a stiff bow and said crossly Not at all and then half turning his back to her selected one letter and put the others in his pocket. As he slit the envelope she saw to whom it was addressed—Miss Barbara Allen. He read the letter through, then got into his car and drove off toward town. He put the letter in the glove compartment.

A girl came out of the front door and ran down the walk to the mailbox. In spite of the rolled-up blue jeans and the untidy shirt—in spite of the mop of brown hair and the round green eyes as bright and mischievous as a squirrel's—she contrived to look somehow Victorian. She said hello to Miss Billings and then opened the mail box.

SHE pawed around in the box, then looking puzzled and disappointed walked slowly over to Miss Billings. That's pretty the girl said and then added suddenly Did you notice if my father got any letters when he went out? Miss Billings said Yes he did. Then she looked up. You're Barbara aren't you? she asked. The girl said Yes—how did you know? Oh I've heard a lot about you said Miss Billings. Heard about me—how could you? Did Jack send you?

Was your letter from Jack? Miss Billings asked. What letter? Barbara said and Miss Billings said The letter your father has. You mean father *took* a letter addressed to me? Barbara demanded. Oh dear perhaps I shouldn't have said anything said Miss Billings hypocritically.

So Barbara dropped down on the grass beside her and said Oh I think that is perfectly disgusting! My own father! So that's why— She stopped. How did you know he did? she asked. Miss Billings said I was right here and I looked at the envelope. I was interested—naturally.

Naturally had been the right word. Because Miss Billings was always interested in other people's private affairs. But Barbara took it to mean a special personal interest. Miss Billings said I suppose you'd like that letter. If it is still in the glove compartment perhaps I can get it for you. Barbara clasped her hands. Oh she said do you think you could?

So a little later Miss Billings drove into Silchester. She left her car at the garage with instructions to drive it out to the Allens' to pick her up at four o'clock and then she went to the bank and asked to see Mr. Allen. For she had been right in her guess—he was president of the Farmers Loan and Trust.

He rose when she came into the office and she said Mr. Allen? and then gave a start of surprise and said Why is it your lovely house I was sketching this morning? Mr. Allen said yes it was and what could he do for her? So Miss Billings said that as she planned to stay in Silchester for a few weeks she thought it might be more convenient if she opened an account with the local bank and she wrote out a check for $1200 on the Algonquin Trust of Albany. She said If you need a reference I'll give you my cousin Horace Billings who is president of the Algonquin.

So when she had scribbled two specimen signatures and got her checkbook Mr. Allen asked her a few coldly polite questions. And she told him what a charming house he had and how sorry she was that she wouldn't be able to do any more painting until tomorrow because she'd driven into town to get some more colors and the car starter had gone bad and the garage wouldn't promise it before four o'clock.

H'm said Mr. Allen. I'm going home to lunch in half an hour. If you don't mind waiting I can run you out. On the way out Mr. Allen drove her past some of the more pretentious local houses. She leaned out to look at an old doorway with a fanlight and the wind caught her floppy hat and blew it off. So Mr. Allen stopped and went back for it. And when he returned Barbara's letter had been transferred from the glove compartment to Miss Billings' bag.

AT HIS gate Mr. Allen dropped Miss Billings and drove on into the garage.

In exactly an hour the coupé came out again and stopped beside her, and Mr. Allen leaned out. I think I should tell you he said that while I have no objection to your sketching the house there can be no question of my buying the painting. Miss Billings made her usual remark about how she just did it for fun and Mr. Allen said Well as long as that is understood.

When Mr. Allen had gone Barbara came out.

(*Continued on page 58*)

Miss Billings Barbara said This is Andrew Dunham the human timepiece. If you want to set your watch I can tell you that it is exactly three P.M.

ROBERT BAGBY PHOTO FROM F.P.G.

Scenes like this in the Strout "Money-Making Farms" catalogue and captioned "Your own Utopia, terms arranged," are responsible for the fact that more than fifty per cent of the farms sold by Strout are sold to city people.

FARMS—$295 and UP

L6015-86,70

FARMS

Subtle exploitation of every American's yen for a little place in the country has made Edwin Albert Strout the world's champ dealer in farms

By

EDWIN DIEHL

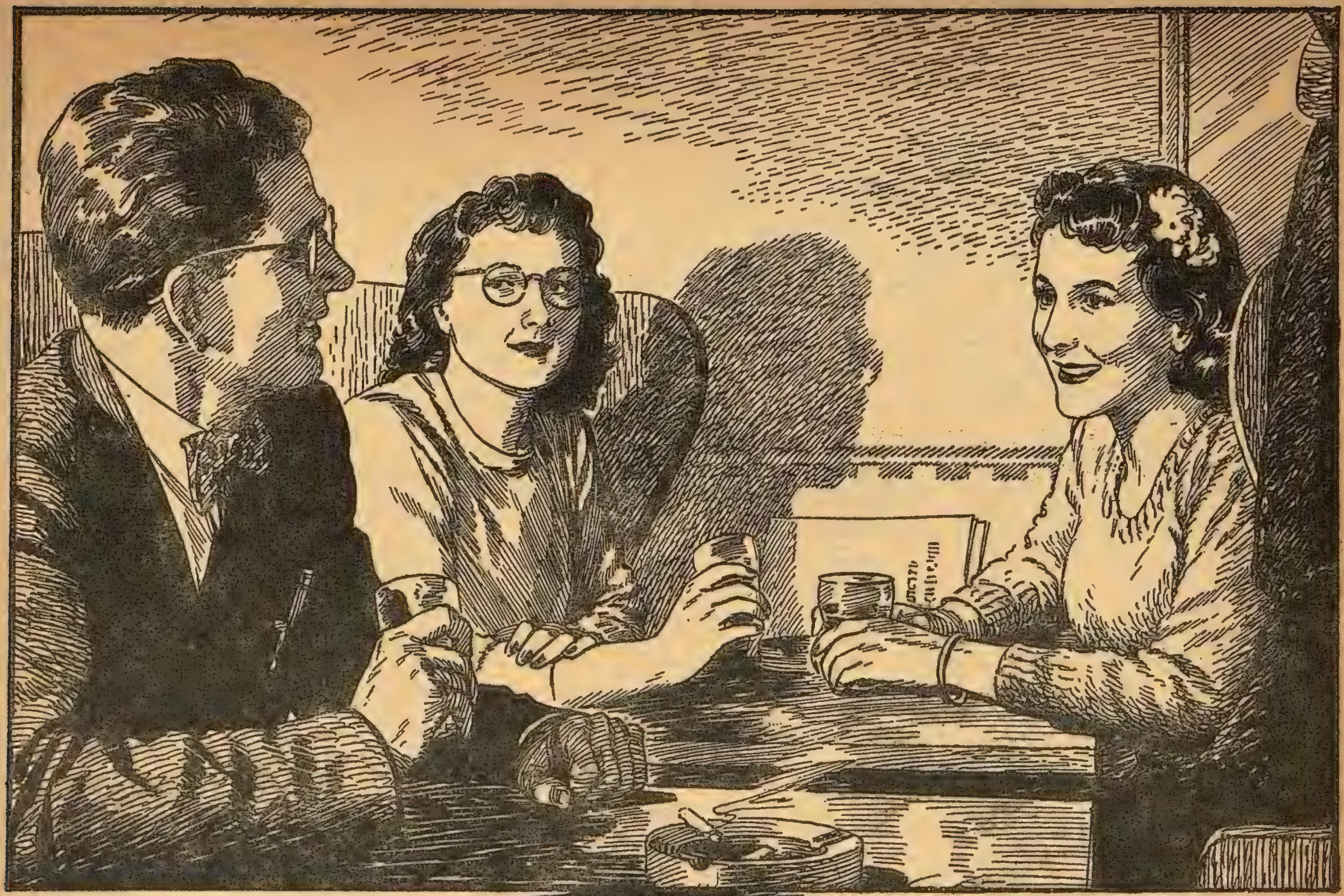
THE world's No. 1 farm salesman is seventy-five-year-old Edwin Albert Strout, who is selling farms at the rate of one every ninety minutes. His expanding organization, with its more than 400 associate agents in some thirty states, has made Strout the biggest name in farm real estate. In forty-six years of operation he has sold enough acreage to make a strip four miles wide from Maine to California.

That figurative strip, indicative of the unflagging zeal of Strout and his staff, is going to get wider, too. For, as V. A. Miehls, vice-president and general manager of the organization, says, the swing back to farms today is greater than any period in the past half century. Already this year the Strout associates are 1,000 sales ahead of last year. In May of this year they chalked up 618 sales, in June they bettered the record, and by year's end they expect to go well over the 5,000 mark. The reason for the big demand for farm land is manifold.

"You have the housing shortage," says Miehls. "Then the returning G.I.s, with their Bill of Rights and ability to get a $4,000 loan easily, want land for business purposes. A lot more people want the security of home-grown food in these days of famine all over the world. Another group fears depression or some sort of economic collapse, and they want to be self-sustaining and own a farm as a backlog against the future. Then, of course, a lot of buyers take on farms just for the investment."

To get some idea of how the fabulous Strout system works, you have to go back to the summer of 1900 when Strout returned to his boyhood haunts in Kents Hill, Maine, for a vacation. He was set upon by four farmers who wailed they wanted to sell their places but couldn't find buyers. "Nonsense!" proclaimed

(Continued on page 52)



THE HORIZONTAL MAN

L5741-40
L5813-25

BY HELEN EUSTIS

A handsome young professor at a girls' college murdered on his own hearth and the only clue a frenzied woman's voice. From that point reporter Jack Donelly and student Kate Innes began sleuthing, but it finally took a psychiatrist to uncover the horror that lurked at quiet Hollymount College. This is one of the most skillfully written mysteries of the year.

ILLUSTRATED BY LAWRENCE BUTCHER

A LIBERTY BOOK CONDENSATION · *READING TIME: ONE EVENING*

Copyright, 1946, by Helen Eustis Harris. Published by Harper & Brothers, New York. Price $2.50

“OH now,” he said, “oh now, I say, look here . . .” trying to summon a tone of commonplace to breast the tide of nightmare that was rising in that room.

Outside, the college clock tolled the half hour, measured, reassuring. He blessed the bells. After all, it was not nightmare. He cleared his throat and began again. “I say,” he said, almost tenderly, “you're not well, you know. Do let me take you home.”

“No!” she cried, loud and harsh—and it gave him hope that someone might hear that voice—“I'm not sick! At last I am well, at last I can tell you, Kevin, that I love you.”

His hand gripped the mantel; slowly, and—he hoped—imperceptibly, he began to edge toward the door. But her eye saw everything; she took a step toward him. “You can't stop me!” she triumphed, “*He* can't stop me! I'm free at last for once and all. Kevin, we can be together at last, rid of him!”

Another moment and he would be weeping with terror, he thought. It was a scene from hell. He took another cautious step toward the door.

“Look,” he said, trying firmness, “truly you must go home and lie down. I'm going to run out and get you a cab now—there's sure to be one at the corner—and I'm going to take you home and put you to bed.”

He turned his face from that figure, that indecent obscenity, turned with the intention of walking calmly toward the door, but instead, met his death when the poker crashed, with a lightning upward blow, against the base of his skull.

THE dusk was coming down; the yellow lights filling the square windows around the quadrangle of dormitories. All day long she had knelt here on the window seat, her door locked, weeping, shaking, falling asleep of exhaustion, weeping again. He was dead, her beautiful darling gone.

If she had had courage—yesterday, the day before, last month—she would have run to him saying, I love you! I will black your boots, mend your clothes—anything. I love you! If yesterday were back again, how she would run to him, thrust herself between him and that bloody, importunate death!

What you are is a coward, Molly Morrison, she told herself in the deepest contempt of despair. Good for words and weeping, that was all. How do you expect to be an artist, to speak your dearest thoughts in paint and line when you cannot even tell your love? Only the scribblings and scratchings, the horrible papers and notebooks full of . . . what could only disgust her now.

Slowly, louder and louder in her ears, a sound made itself known beyond the sound of her own crying. Someone was knocking at the door. “Molly,” a voice called, “Molly, dear, please let me in! It's Miss Sanders.”

She could not answer, but she held back her sobs and listened. She heard a colloquy: “. . . all day . . .” and “. . . door's locked . . .” and “. . . doctor. . . .”

“Miss Sanders,” she called out in a harsh voice that did not sound like her own, “I'll open the door for you if you'll make the rest of them go away.”

“Yes, dear, of course.” More colloquy; the sound of diminishing footsteps.

She turned the key in the lock and opened the door. Miss Sanders stepped over the threshold. She thrust her hand out toward Molly's face; Molly tossed her head and backed away.

“I only wanted to see if you were feverish,” said Miss Sanders meekly.

“No,” she said in her new rough voice, “I'm not. It's only,” she spoke very evenly, “that I've been upset about the murder.”

The body of Kevin Boyle, the paper had said, was found lying on the hearth. If Mr. Marks had not discovered it at 7 P. M., a severe fire might have resulted, as the dead man's coat was about to catch flame. The back of the head was clotted with black curls and blood.

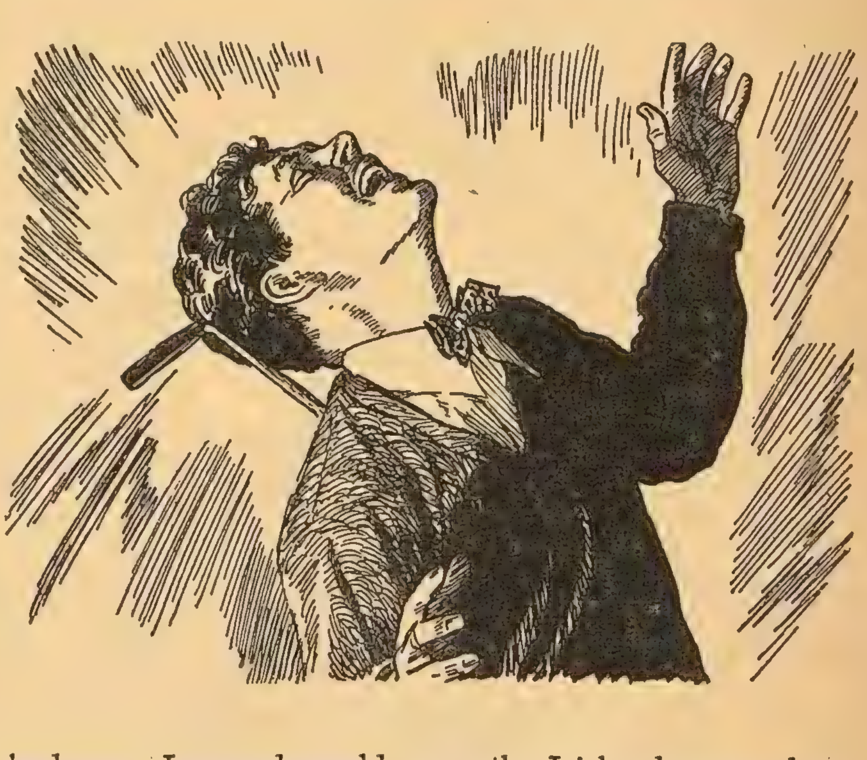
“Why, Molly,” said Miss Sanders, “did you *know* Mr. Boyle?”

“I had a class with him,” said Molly faintly. Oh no, I didn't know him; I only thought about him every minute of my waking life. . . . Miss Sanders still stood before her, but dimmer now; over her plump shoulder his lean, saturnine, pipe-biting face grinned; his beautiful sloppy, gaunt figure: . . . “It was not,” Molly said vaguely, “that he was my lover,” and burst into a long low wail of anguish, her face hidden in her thin white hands.

Once she had been drunk, and it had been, in a way, like this. There had been a central theme—sometimes you lost the melody of it in diffusions of sound. Like the putting on of the coat, the walking down the stairs, like the girls' faces, looking up the stairs at her from where they clustered round the mail desk; like the taxi, the steps . . .

In the hall of the Infirmary, the theme came back. One small lamp burned on a desk where a nurse sat writing. In the arches of darkness overhead the melody swelled out: Kevin Boyle is dead, was the theme; he was murdered yesterday, a bare three hours after you parted from him. Kevin Boyle is dead. You will never say to him, I love you, my darling.

MANY a time Leonard Marks had sat here in his room with Kevin Boyle slouched comfortably in the worn old armchair, looking into the fire and talking of this and that—though mostly of that, mostly of Kevin. Was ever a man so pursued of women? Could the tales be true? Or was it all a beautiful Irish fiction, invented half to please that broth of a Kevin, half to torture poor weak-chinned, bespectacled Leonard? Sometimes, after Kevin had gone, Leonard would curse the Irish who were born to outshine, with their wild romanticism, all the other, soberer, steadier, less noticeable races of mankind.



Yet if Kevin had been lying with his tales of conquest, it was his lies, at last, which had done him in. For last evening Leonard, sitting over his books, had heard Kevin's voice cry out “No!” in protest, sounding through the two closed doors, had heard the thud, the slam, the footsteps. He had not gone to investigate then, thinking this was one of the ladies who threw themselves upon Kevin, (or so Kevin had related it—many times) so that he had to disengage their clasping arms gently and let them know that no one woman would ever possess him for her own.

But two hours later when Leonard had knocked and gone in to see if Kevin was ready for supper, Kevin had been lying dead, the back of his head smashed in with the poker.

Leonard had shut the door carefully behind him, had called the landlady, had telephoned the police, answered their questions, spoken to the reporter from the town paper—but cautiously, giving only the barest outline, avoiding all question of Kevin's character, his habits. He had not gone to bed until long after midnight, yet had risen to conduct his eight-thirty class. He had borne himself well, and here was his reward. Across the hearth from him, in the worn leather chair, the great George Hungerford, honorary head of the English Department now sat, hunched forward over his knees, prodding the coals with the short iron poker.

"Mix me a drink, will you, Marks?" he said, his infinitely melancholy face pale even in the firelight, and terribly worn. With a nervous jerk of eagerness, Leonard was out of his chair. Hungerford's voice came again with a tortured, pleading note. "Marks, who could have killed him? Why should *he* have to die?"

"He was," Leonard said, forcing open the soda bottle, "a passionate man."

He set the glasses on a tray. He was gnawed by an enormous curiosity which he dared not indulge. Hungerford had visited Kevin two and three times a week. Leonard had often wondered on what paths their conversation wandered.

He had just sat down with his drink when Hungerford said abruptly, "What makes you say that, Marks—that he was passionate?"

"Why," said Leonard, giggling his nervous treble laugh, "we generally talked about women—that is, he did."

Hungerford was afflicted by a severe tic which drew up the whole side of his face from time to time, like one of those rubber faces children play with and distort. It did so now. "That was a side of him I never knew," he said. "Our conversations were generally literary or professional. Possibly," he added, his mouth sardonic, "he regarded me as a creature whose passion was spent. Did you know, by the way, that he was collecting poems for a book?"

Leonard shook his head and a stab of jealousy, the first since Kevin's murder, attacked him.

Hungerford chewed the inside of his cheek. "What do you know of his relations with women?"

"Mr. Hungerford, I never heard him mention a woman's name, and the only ones I have ever seen coming to his rooms here were our landlady and Mrs. Cramm. Mrs. Cramm was in and out a good deal. At all hours."

"Freda has too much bark to be much of a biter," said Hungerford, and stared into the fire.

Hah! cried Leonard silently. He knew too well the bite of Freda Cramm, his colleague in the English Department. Freda who had purred and fawned on Kevin Boyle; who, Leonard thought, had been carrying on illicit relations with Kevin and had murdered him to shut his mouth; if Leonard had a scar for every one of his sentences she had interrupted in Department meetings, for the tête-a-têtes between himself and Kevin on which she had broken in, sending him off to his rooms like a child who has outstayed his bedtime. . . . "She always struck me as a rather violent woman," he said quietly.

Hungerford drained his glass at a gulp. Then the tic again seized hold of his face; he sat frozen in an awkward position. Two tears slipped over his eyelids, ran down his cheeks. Finally he rose like an old, old man.

Mutely, Leonard rose too; took Hungerford's coat and hat from the closet, helped him into the sleeves. "Goodnight, Marks," said Hungerford, the great Hungerford—almost pitifully, looking into Leonard's eyes as they stood at the door.

Hungerford walked away slowly, leaning on the crook of his umbrella, oblivious to the rain. He went through the iron gates of the college to the main street of the town. Across from the auditorium stood the house where he rented rooms. He unlocked the door and climbed the stairs to his apartment.

He turned on the light in his living room, and inside his head the voice began to laugh, faint and distant and vicious. For there on his desk lay the notebook, opened wide; across the room the huge mad handwriting screamed at him, commanding him to read, commanding him to taste again the depths of human vileness and despise. . .

"I GOTTA get an angle," crooned the young man, rocking his face between his hands. "I simply gotta get an angle. Didn't the guy ever come in here?"

"Yep," said the bartender. "Used to come here about every other night. Always some bunch of girls—students—would ask him to come sit in their booth in the back room. Ten o'clock they'd leave—have to be back at the college at ten fifteen. Then he'd come out here and have another beer. Maybe he'd meet Mr. Marks. Maybe he'd meet Mr. Hungerford. Him and Mr. Hungerford would talk poetry like. Him and Mr. Marks'd talk about women. He'd tell some mighty hot stories, but to tell you the truth, I think he was a kind of timid fellow, for all his big talk."

"Oh hell," said the reporter disgustedly, "that's no story. Gimme another beer."

"Listen, Mister," said the bartender, "why'n't you go in the back room and strike up a conversation with some of them students? They're always full of a pack of lies."

"Try anything," muttered the young man.

THE back room had two rows of fumed-oak booths running along the walls. The reporter carried his beer to an empty booth opposite one where two girls sat. One of them was what is referred to as a long-stemmed American beauty. The other was on the dumpy side, with a frowsy feather cut and horn-rimmed glasses like the young man's own. She was wearing dungarees and a sweatshirt; the first had on a pale-pink sweater and skirt.

The reporter sat regarding them out of the corner of his eye as he sipped his beer, thinking about the best approach. The pink one was not so bright—she was the one to work on. The fat cookie looked like an intellectual. She was the one to watch out for at first, but if you got her on your side, she could help you more. O. K., now he had it straight. He raised his head and looked straight into the fat one's eyes. "Can I sit with you?"

Fatty looked him up and down and turned to the beauty. "I think he's a reporter."

The beauty giggled. "I think reporters are *cute,*" she said in a severe southern accent.

He crossed the aisle and sat down beside her. "My name is Jack Donelly."

"Mine is Kate Innes," said Fatty, "and this is Honey Sacheveral."

"Well, you have to have a drink on me now," he said.

"Scotch and soda," said Kate promptly.

"Alexayunduh," said Honey, and giggled.

He beckoned to the waitress and ordered, changing to Scotch himself.

"Well," said Kate, leaning back and folding her short arms across her sweatshirt, "this morning in chapel the president told us not to talk to reporters. Naturally we have to try it. What paper are you on?"

"*Messenger,*" he said glumly.

"Scandal sheet," said Kate.

"A person has to eat," said Donelly.

"*Mah* daddy says," Honey remarked, "don't quarrel with your bread and butter." Her drink was gone. "Will you buy me another Alexayunduh, Mistuh Donelly?"

"A pleasure, my dear," he replied benignly.

"So what have you picked up about the murder?" Kate said, finishing her Scotch. Jack ordered her another without asking.

"I haven't found out a damn thing," he said disgustedly. "Not a single soul who has ever been to his rooms has an alibi for the time of the murder, and nobody seems to care. Leonard Marks was sitting across the hall in his room—could have come over and slugged him as easy as not. George Hungerford was sleeping off a sick headache. That's a fine alibi. A dame named Freda Cramm was out for a drive to see the hunter's moon rise. Nobody remembers seeing her. The landlady in the place where he lives was at the movies—nobody saw her there. Nobody saw anybody. I personally think that either the guy slipped and fell on the poker, thereby busting in his own head, or else everybody in town bumped him off in a group."

"There's a girl at our house," said Honey dreamily, "who had an aw-ful crush on him. She's an awful drip."

"She's a nice enough kid," said Kate fiercely. "She's just miserable. Keep your trap shut when you don't know what you're talking about, which is usually."

"Are you ready for another Alexander, honey-chile?" said the reporter tenderly, and Honey was.

He put some nickels in the juke machine and came back to the table. "Dance?" he said to Kate. She turned scarlet. "In these?" she said, looking down at her dungarees. Then she tightened her mouth. "Sure." Surprisingly, she was not a bad dancer. She floated along like a firm little balloon in her dirty tennis shoes.

When the record was over they went back to the table.

Honey's drink was gone again; she was beginning to look glassy eyed.

"What about the kid that had the crush on Boyle?" said Donelly abruptly, sitting down beside her.

"Huh?" she said, coming out of her fog. "Oh—she has an awful crush on him. *She* got so hys-*ter*-ical *they* had to send her to the In-*fir*-mary. Mr. I-forgetcher name, will you buy me another Alexayunduh?"

"You're plastered, Sacheveral," said Kate, rising. "It's five of ten and I'm going to walk you home."

Jack rose too. "Look, I've got a car, let me drive you."

"Nuh-uh," Kate refused.

He caught at her elbow desperately. "Look," he said, "give me a break. What's the name of the cookie with the crush?"

"Morrison," said Honey, before Kate could stop her, "Molly Morrison. And is she a *goon*!"

"I think you're a heel," Kate said to Donelly fiercely. "You leave that kid alone! If this sees the light of print I'll—I'll bash *your* head with a poker!"

Donelly smirked. "Business is business," he said, "but I do love spirit in a woman. Tell you what, Chubby, if I thought you could look other than as if you'd just crawled out from under a car, I'd ask you to take in a flick with me Friday night."

"You!" spluttered Kate. "You yellow journalist!" But he saw the rush of pink come into her face as she grabbed Honey roughly and hauled her out of the bar.

DR. JULIAN FORSTMANN, consulting psychiatrist for the college, knocked on President Bainbridge's office door. Bainbridge opened it with his hat and coat in hand. "Don't come in and sit down," he said. "I'll tell you what I know on the way to the Infirmary. I want to be able to tell the police as soon as I can that you've examined her."

"How's Hungerford?" said the doctor as they got into the car.

"Hungerford? Oh, he was your patient, wasn't he? He seems very well. Doesn't go out much, but handles his classes all right."

Forstmann grunted and turned the car down a side street. "Tell me what you know about the girl," he said.

"Comes from Cincinnati, father is an artist. Since she's been here she's been failing four out of five courses, the fifth being an art course—drawing. I am told by the housemother in her dormitory that she has been rather unpopular and antisocial. Since she's been in the infirmary, some of the girls have told Miss Sanders—that's the housemother—that she was always writing in journals, or something of the sort, but frankly, I haven't felt justified in having the girl's room searched for private papers as yet."

"It would probably be best to have such matters in a safe place," said Forstmann gravely.

"Good," said Bainbridge, "I'll have Miss Sanders look through her things. Then there has been this so-called crush on Boyle. When he was killed, she went completely haywire. Miss Sanders wrote to the girl's mother, but hasn't had an answer. Yesterday, a young man turned up who announced himself at the Infirmary as her brother. The head nurse had no reason to suspect he was anything else, and let him in to see her. That, apparently, was the *Messenger* reporter. The next thing was that the chief of police got hold of the *Messenger* story first thing this morning, blustered his way into the girl's room, and got a signed confession from her."

"Have you seen—or have you got the confession?"

"Oh Lord," groaned Bainbridge, "What a fool. Of course you would want to see that first of all. I never even thought of it."

"Never mind. I'll see it later."

They got out of the car and hurried up the brick walk, looking like Mutt and Jeff, the psychiatrist tall and lanky, the president short and rotund.

A nurse opened the door, a red-headed, hatchet-faced woman who had been weeping.

"Miss Justin is putting herself through the torments of the damned for having let the reporter in," said Bainbridge wearily to his companion.

"Are you Molly Morrison's nurse?" asked Forstmann. "Have you her charts?"

"Oh, yes, Dr. Forstmann," cried Miss Justin, and disappeared starchily down the hall. Bainbridge shook his head in admiration. "All morning she wept on my shoulder. *You* present her with a tidbit of occupational therapy and she's off as happily as a beagle after a rabbit."

"I think you'd better go away, Lucien," said Forstmann amiably. "You communicate your state of nerves to everyone but me. And have a drink ready for me at five o'clock."

In the dim white room he made out a white bloated face on the pillow, a pointed face under an auburn bang, distorted by weeping, and he sat down at the bedside.

"Molly," he said after he had made friends with her, "I'm a psychiatrist. I'm here to find out why it is you're so unhappy." At this she sobbed out loud once, then caught her breath. "And to see if you can't find the source of your unhappiness and be rid of it."

"That's impossible," she said flatly. "He is dead. I killed him."

"Listen, Molly," he said, "do you mean literally that you killed Kevin Boyle, or do you mean that you feel you are responsible for his death?"

She began to sob aloud and roll her head back and forth on the pillow. "I killed him!" she said. "I murdered him! I had no courage. He was all I had in the world and I killed him!"

WHEN Bainbridge returned to his office, the plump Kate Innes was there waiting to see him. He sat down at his desk and looked at her pointedly. "Well?"

"Mr. Bainbridge," said Kate miserably, "that story in the *Messenger* is all my fault, in a way. Here's how it happened: I was sitting in the Harlow Taproom with another person when a young man came in whom I spotted at once for a reporter.

"How?" said Bainbridge.

"Well, he looked like a Harvard boy except for the rings around his eyes and a certain indefinable something. I *deliberately lured* him to come and sit with us, Mr. Bainbridge, because at chapel you had asked us not to talk to reporters!"

"Oh fine, fine!" snorted Bainbridge. "This leads me to regard my position of mentor in an entirely new light."

"I can't help it, Mr. Bainbridge," said Kate solemnly. "When anybody talks to me as if I hadn't good sense, I'm immediately tempted to act as if I hadn't. But anyhow, we had a couple of drinks, and this person I was with got a little tight." She gazed at him steadfastly over the rims of her glasses. "If I were noble, Mr. Bainbridge, I'd say I was the one who let the cat out of the bag, but anybody can see I'm not the kind of a girl a man gets drunk and worms things out of."

"Anybody," said Bainbridge drily.

"So this person began responding to the reporter's insinuations about what did we know about the murder by talking about Molly Morrison, because her crush on Mr. Boyle had gotten to be the house joke."

"Miss Innes," said Bainbridge, "this morning, Molly Morrison signed for the police a confession of having murdered Kevin Boyle."

"Oh, no!" she said. "That's impossible!"

Bainbridge was watching her steadily. "You mean you think she is incapable of such an act?"

"As murder? Absolutely! I'll—I'll stake my reputation on it!"

Bainbridge raised his eyebrows. "Well, I hope you're right. We're going to have a professional opinion on it this afternoon—Dr. Forstmann, our consulting psychiatrist, is examining the girl. So far we've been able to keep this thing relatively quiet and to restrain conjecture. With the *Messenger* article, I imagine that all hell—if you'll pardon the expression—will break loose."

"What about the reporter, Mr. Bainbridge? I'll bet that if you talked to him and scared him witless first—threatened a libel suit or something—and then relented, you could get yourself some publicity of the kind you'd really like to have."

"The only kind of publicity I want at this juncture is an honorable obituary some forty years hence."

"See him, Mr. Bainbridge!" pleaded Kate. "I'm *sure* there'd be something in it—besides my seeing him beaten down to his socks—and if I could just feel I'd done something to square myself for being such a ninny—"

"All right," said Bainbridge doubtfully. "When can you bring him around?"

"Well," said Kate, "he said something about a movie tonight . . ."

Bainbridge cocked an eyebrow. "Very well, you can bring him around to my house, if you like, between eight and nine."

"Good," cried Kate, rising. "If I have to manacle him."

HUNGERFORD lay on his day bed, clutching the mattress as if the couch were rocking and he feared to fall off. On the table, within reach of his hand, lay a single capsule and a tumbler of water. He must not take the capsule until six o'clock. Then he could sleep like death for an hour, and be able to go down to his supper.

Last year at this time he had been in a sanitarium. Bainbridge had sent him there when he began to crack—the quarrel with Freda Cramm when he had told her at last what a bitch he thought she was; the attempted suicide—the bitterness of failing even at your own death! Bainbridge had given him a year's leave of absence. And when he came back he found himself honorary chairman of the English Department, smothered in kindness, in understanding. But someone hated him, deeply and bitterly. Someone wished to drive him mad. And, not impossibly, it was the same someone who had murdered Kevin Boyle. . .

It had begun last month. He had returned from supper one evening to find an ordinary notebook lying open on his desk. The pages were covered with enormous, backhand, yet somehow warped schoolgirl writing. There was a date at the top; what followed was an entry in a journal, an entry devoted to a description of himself. It was in part obscene, in part exaggeratedly cruel, in part brutally true. Most of all there was the impression of a mind which was cunning, sensitive to evil. It was of such devilishness that he could not remember a word of it, only the terrible shock of first reading.

He had laid it away, meaning to examine it at some time when the shock of its vileness had diminished, but he had never found the courage, until one day it lay open again on his desk, a new entry, a new page of vitriolic animosity and obscenity. There had been several now—five or six. It was obviously the work of a madwoman (for it became plain that the writer was a woman or girl). And he did not know where to turn for a solution, now that Kevin Boyle was dead. For in the last entry it had become clear that the creature was someone known to both of them—or at least someone who knew them both—someone, in fact, who had been in love with Kevin.

He saw now that it was six o'clock. He closed his eyes. Could he—was it possible that he could sleep without the capsule? For a moment his muscles relaxed. Then suddenly the telephone bell drilled mercilessly; Hungerford started like a man pierced by a bullet. Shaking all over, he rose unsteadily and lifted the phone from its cradle. "Hello," he said tremulously.

"George," said the miniature voice at his ear, "it's Freda Cramm."

"He-hello," he stammered. "Hello, Freda."

"George, I want to get the English Department together at my house for some sort of memorial gathering for Kevin Boyle. Kevin told me you had the manuscript of his book of poems. I wondered if you would be willing to read a group of them to us on Friday evening, and maybe say something about them? You see one of the editors from Cornish House is passing through, and I thought there might be a possibility of their publishing the book."

"What difference does it make," said Hungerford, "now he's dead?"

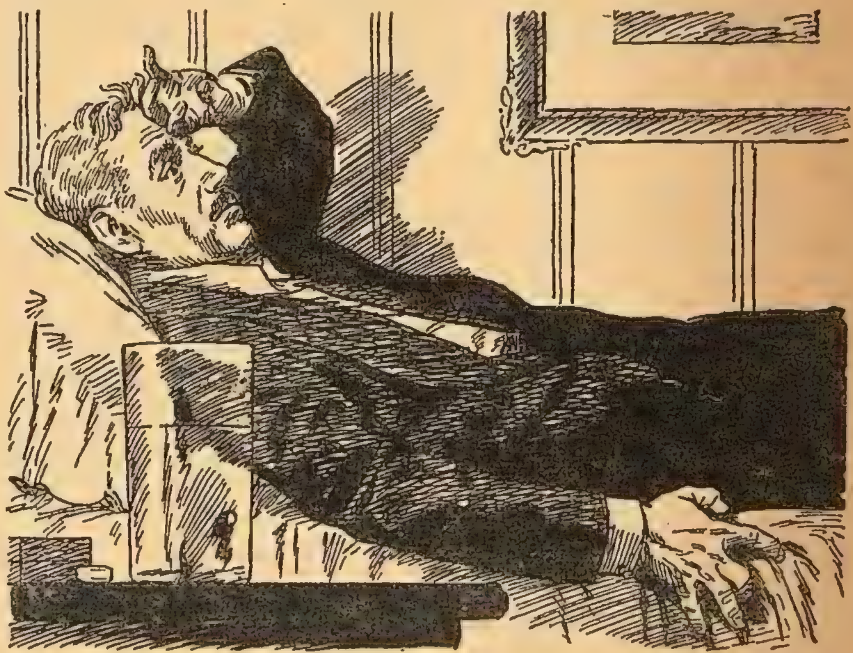
"Why," Freda bridled audibly, "I should think you'd be glad . . ." Then recollecting that she must humor him . . . "If you won't mind doing it, I think it will be a fine memorial for Kevin."

"Very well," he said shortly, and hung up.

Suddenly the side of his face drew together in the distorting tic, and the thing in his mind began to happen. He flung himself at the table by the day bed, but he upset the water. No matter; he took the capsule and swallowed it dry, the gelatinous sides melting and sticking in his throat. He lay down and clutched the mattress again. Now he was safe from it, sleep would come; he could even think of it, because it could not happen to him now, that terrible thing which happened in his head.

There was a mountain—that was his brain. He was on the plain, looking up at it. Suddenly he saw a crevice begin to open down its side, a terrible wound from which the bowels of the earth in all their foulness came spilling out . . . His face contorted into the tic because it was changing, slowly, slowly changing, his hands were changing, his feet were changing—but it was never really accomplished, thank God.

AT eight o'clock Kate Innes sat resplendent in the smoking room of Birnham House, kibitzing on a bridge game. Her hair was clean and curled, she had foregone her glasses. A black dress did its best for her girdled curves; she wore sheer stockings and black pumps.



At five minutes after eight the maid came to the door and said, "Miss Innes, you have a caller." Gathering up her purse and squinting in order to avoid the furniture, she made her way into the foyer where Jack Donelly stood.

"Say, you look just as cute as a little red wagon!"

"I please you? Good. You may help me with my coat." In a queenly manner she picked up her borrowed Persian lamb and held it out to him. "I forgot to tell you, I have to stop at a friend's house to pick up a book. Will you go by Eden Street?"

"Sure, sure," he said innocently. They got into an elderly Plymouth coupe with labels stuck on the windshield saying *Press* and *Messenger*. At Kate's direction they wound through the dark streets of the town and in a few moments pulled up in front of Bainbridge's house.

"Come on in, I won't be a minute," she said.

"Hey," said Donelly suspiciously. "What gives here?"

She turned on him viciously. "I'm a white slaver—didn't you know? What have you got to lose?"

"O. K., O. K.," he pacified meekly, and piled out of the car.

Kate rang the bell and Bainbridge himself opened the door. "Hello, Mr. Bainbridge," she said, "may I present that Galahad of the newspaper world, Mr. Jack Donelly?"

"Oh-oh," said Donelly, and regarded the tips of his shoes.

"How do you do, Mr. Donelly?" said the president. "Will you permit me to observe that it is a somewhat mixed pleasure to meet you?"

"I'll permit you," said Donelly resignedly.

Bainbridge ushered them into the living room. When they were out of their coats and seated, a silence fell. Finally Bainbridge spoke.

"I suppose it was in the line of business, Mr. Donelly, that you misrepresented yourself to gain admission to a sick girl's room and led her to say things which you might twist into an admission of having committed murder?"

"I was sent here to get a story; I got one."

"Oh, you did, you did indeed," said Bainbridge. "Is it your impression that Molly Morrison murdered Kevin Boyle?"

"How should I know?" Jack said defensively. "I'm sent here to find out what I can—I take what I found out and make it into a story to help raise circulation. That's what I'm paid for—not to have an expert opinion on who murdered who."

"*Whom*," muttered Kate.

"I didn't ask you what you know," Bainbridge pointed out gently. "I asked you for your impression. I'm not baiting you, Donelly. I'll leave that to Miss Innes. Frankly, I'm scared of your paper—it's known as a scandal sheet, and I'd much prefer to have you working with me than to have you against me."

"I don't see just how that will work out," said Jack sulkily.

"Neither do I," said Bainbridge. "But I thought we might talk it over. Will you answer my question?"

"No," said Jack finally, "it is not my impression that that kid murdered Boyle—whatever good my impression is to anybody; but it is my impression that any district attorney who had nobody better to pick on could work up a pretty enough case against her. Nobody knows where she was at the time of the murder. As for her own account of herself, it's my opinion that the kid is a little off her rocker—as you might gather from the story. And I'm not too proud of it, if you're waiting for me to say so."

"Mr. Donelly, the police have co-operated with me in hushing up the fact that Molly Morrison signed a confession for them this morning—"

"Holy smoke!" breathed Jack.

"Since then," Bainbridge continued, "I have had her examined by Dr. Forstmann, our consulting psychiatrist. Her perturbation, he says, may actually result from the emotional expenditure of committing the murder, or may be pure reaction to the news of Boyle's violent death, since she seems to have placed an importance on Boyle far beyond any actual relation she had with him. Unless she had some secret connection with him. Oh, Lord," Bainbridge groaned finally, "it's such a mess."

Jack scratched his crew cut impolitely. "Why are you spilling all this to me?"

"Mainly, I think, because I'm getting tired of regarding the press as a large party of ambushing Indians whom I have to look for behind every tree. I haven't much hope of your co-operation, but I thought I could have a look at you at least."

"What do you want me to do?"

"Oh," said Bainbridge, "I guess I had something in mind of this sort: I give you first call on what information I get—and I've already given you the confession story ahead of the other papers—if you'll help me tone down the *Messenger's* view of the lurid side of college life a bit. And I should like to prevent this Morrison child's reputation from being ruined, until it seems there is a good deal more evidence against her than now exists. Molly Morrison may be a murderess, but you doubt it, I doubt it, Miss Innes doubts it. Does it make you happy to think of the kind of scandal that will surround her after this thing, even if she comes out legally clear?"

"Honestly, Mr. Bainbridge," said Jack, "I can't drop that story, big a heel as I may be. I'm not in the business for my health, and the story's too hot. It's the only hot lead of the murder."

KATE rose. "I guess I'll have to work on him, Mr. Bainbridge. I still have faith in the re-education of criminals, but there's no use wasting more of *your* time."

They moved from the living room to the hall.

"Goodnight, Mr. Bainbridge; I'm sorry," said Kate.

"Goodnight."

In silence Kate and Jack got into the car. Jack stepped on the starter. "It's too late for the movies," he said expressionlessly. "Want a drink?"

"You can take me home," said Kate.

"I thought you wanted to reform me."

"You can take me home."

"All right," said Jack, and swung the car angrily in a U-turn. They drove in silence for five minutes.

Suddenly she sat forward in the seat and yelled, "Hey, stop! There's a light in Kevin Boyle's apartment!"

"No doubt the murderer has come back to check on clues," said Jack with fatigued sarcasm. He stopped in front of the rambling, gray frame house. Across the front of it ran a series of small-paned windows, behind which a light was flickering.

They mounted the porch steps with exaggerated stealth. The light was out on the porch; the corner of the house covered them in shadow. They made cups of their hands and peered through the glass. Behind them the house door opened quietly, a step sounded on the porch and a woman gave a short scream. They whirled around and found themselves confronted by a massive figure.

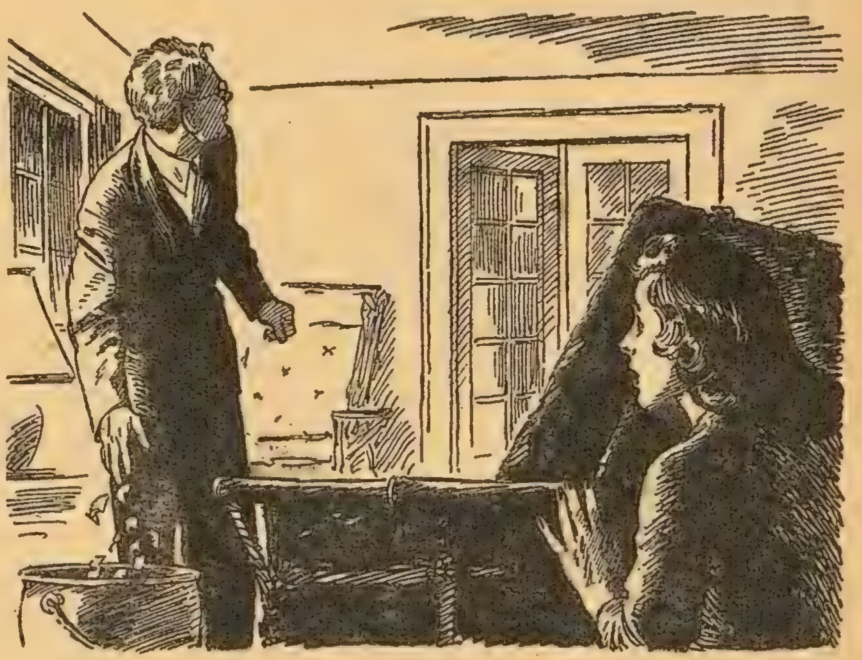
"Mrs. Cramm!" said Kate quaveringly.

For a long moment Freda glared at them, then Jack recovered himself. "Hello, Mrs. Cramm, care to make a statement for the *Messenger* as to why you were visiting the apartment of the deceased at—ah—" he looked at his watch—"9:14 on the evening of the seventeenth?"

"I wasn't—" began Freda Cramm. She looked at Kate with a threatening eye. "This is Miss Innes, editor of *The Holly*, I believe."

"Yes," blithered Kate, "I mean—"

"I assume, Miss Innes, that, since Wednesday morning chapel was required, you heard Mr. Bainbridge's remarks about students associating with reporters?"



"We just came from Mr. Bainbridge's house, as you can easily find out if you call him," put in Jack smoothly. "If you don't care to make a statement, I'm wondering just how to word this. 'Leaving the house of the murdered man, flashlight in hand, Mrs. Cramm refuses to—' "

"My dear man," said Freda, suddenly urbane, "certainly I was in Kevin Boyle's apartment. I'm getting a collection of Mr. Boyle's poems to show to a publisher. I have most of the manuscripts from Mr. Boyle's book, but one of my favorite poems was missing, I found, so I went to look for it."

"Did you find it?" said Jack.

"As a matter of fact, I didn't."

"Maybe it would have been easier if you'd turned on the light."

Freda threw back her head and suddenly laughed her full, stagy laugh. "Oh, *do* suspect me of the murder—nothing so gay has happened to me in years! If you'll notice, my dear, darling *Messenger* reporter, this porch light is out. A blown fuse—evidently Kevin's apartment is on the same circuit. Run in and try it."

"Lucky you had a flashlight," said Jack sourly.

"Isn't it?" agreed Freda brightly. "I happened to walk, and my driveway is always black as the ace of spades."

"Get in and I'll drive you home," he said.

"Oh, I can see I mustn't spoil your twosome," said Freda with elephantine coyness.

"Just as you please," said Jack. Together they descended the porch steps.

"Goodni-eet!" cried Freda, waving to them as she turned down the sidewalk.

"Goodnight," said Kate and Jack in unison.

"Short circuit!" snorted Jack. "They aren't hard to produce." He climbed out of the car again and back up the porch steps.

Just then the porch light winked on, the front door opened, and a tall gaunt woman—the landlady—was silhouetted in it.

"Oh," said Jack. "Have you—I mean *had* you a blown fuse?"

"Yes," she said. "I just put a new one in."

"Well, I'm from the electric shop. Mrs. Cramm phoned for me. She said she was calling from Mr. Boyle's apartment. I just met her on the way out. She said she'd been looking for a manuscript in his place. Didn't you let her in?"

"Oh, dear me!" she cried. "No! And how could she have got in otherwise, for the door was tight locked!"

AT five thirty on Friday Kate called the hotel and got Jack Donelly.

"Listen," she began. "I have for you what is known in the Grade B's as a hot tip."

"Why, cookie," he said, "isn't this cute—you calling me."

"It is solely in the interests of justice," she snarled. "Freda Cramm is throwing a memorial gathering for Kevin Boyle this evening, and I have the feeling you ought to take a look-in."

"You mean put on my blue lace and go as Elsa Maxwell?"

"You can find a way to get in, stupid."

"Oh, sure. But I had dreams of getting out my pipe and slippers and pulling up to a big open bar with you tonight."

"Not with me, friend—I have a lab report due Monday."

"All right, honey," he said wistfully. "Where's the dame's house?"

He listened to the directions, and then said, "O. K. Can I call you tonight and let you know how it comes out?"

"No outside calls to the dormitories after ten-fifteen," she said, and left the booth, noting her pulse rate scientifically. Out of some compulsion which she did not examine, she changed from dungarees to a sweater and skirt, and devoted some time to brushing her hair. There was chocolate pudding at supper, and when she gave hers away to the girl sitting next to her, her table mates made gestures of fainting.

From 7:15 to 9:03 she typed her lab report. At 9:03 she said to herself, aloud, and in a very reasonable tone, "O. K., so suppose I am?" got her coat from the closet, put it on, started out the door, came back, rooted in a dresser drawer and found a lipstick, which she used. Then she hurtled down the stairs and out into the night.

Fifteen minutes later Jack Donelly, lying shivering on the brick floor of Mrs. Cramm's sunporch under a bamboo coffee table, rose to his knees as abruptly as he dared and whirled round, the coffee table dangling like a saddle from his back. "What the hell!" he said in an enraged whisper.

"Down, Fido!" came a whisper in return, and the sound of the porch door being closed. Kate joined him in his prone indignity and they lay regarding each other blinkingly, their faces dimly lit by the glow that shone through the thin curtains on the glass-paned door to the living room.

"You're a damned nuisance," hissed Jack. "Go away!"

Kate propped her chin on her hands and waved her feet airily behind her. "What's been going on?"

"Not a damn thing except that I'm getting a severe sinus attack," Jack whispered back disgustedly, "and somebody has been reading for the last three hours, at a rough guess."

Kate edged forward a little on her stomach. "Let's get closer to the door, and I'll tell you who's who."

"Look," whispered Jack irritably, rising on one elbow, "if you get caught, this will be a schoolgirl prank. If I get caught, it's a misdemeanor or something. You annoy me, brat, and I wish you'd go away."

Kate looked at him with her round face shining dimly in the curtained glow from the floor. Two large shimmering tears unexpectedly rolled out of her eyes and formed little canals around the inside rims of her glasses. She rose to her hands and knees and the tears fell to the floor in two little splats.

"Why, cookie!" said Jack in amazement. He made a move toward her, and the coffee table rose irately on two legs. For a moment they juggled it between them.

"Get down!" whispered Kate suddenly, and they flattened themselves just as an unseen hand opened the door from the living room. The reading was over and the stream of conversation was babbling on. ". . . Terribly hot in here . . ." they heard Freda Cramm's voice trailing away from them.

Jack worked his way clear of the coffee table. He gave Kate's ankle a gentle yank. "Let's get behind the sofa here," he whispered urgently.

"Why?" she whispered back. "Then we can't see anything." But he was already disappearing behind the piece of furniture in question, so she followed.

"Now," he said, when she had collected herself in the dark shadow, and planting his lips on hers, maintained this position with her full consent until interrupted by a step on the brick floor of the porch.

They sprang apart as guiltily as a Victorian couple on the parlor sofa, quickly rearranged themselves, and peered cautiously around opposite ends of the couch. A man was moving toward a large brass maple-syrup kettle intended for a wastebasket. Out of his pocket he drew a piece of paper, and tearing it into tiny bits, he let them shiver down through the air into the kettle. Then, with an exclamation, he stooped down, carefully collected them again, and dropped them into his pocket. Suddenly the door was snatched wide open, and Kate and Jack popped back behind the sofa.

"Why, Mr. Marks," said Freda Cramm's voice coyly, "are you hiding?"

"Oh," came Leonard Marks' voice in a hoarse croak, "—ah—Mrs. Cramm—just getting a breath of cool air."

"Well, come in!" pleaded Freda warmly and drew him back inside.

"Get *that!*" breathed Kate dazedly, but was masterfully recalled to dalliance, and spent the time until the breaking up of the party in what can only be described as necking on the icy brick floor of Freda Cramm's solarium.

NEXT morning a knock sounded on Leonard Marks' door. He opened the door to a sharp-looking young man with horn-rimmed glasses.

"Mr. Marks?" the young man said, somehow injecting breeziness into those two words, "I'm from the *Messenger*. Wondered if you'd care to tell me a little something about Mr. Boyle's poetry."

"Oh," said Leonard, aware of his unshaven face, his heavy breath, and his uncertain vision. "Won't you come in and sit down?"

"Thank you," said the reporter, and sat.

"Some coffee?" said Leonard.

But the young man said he had already breakfasted. "I understand there was a reading of Mr. Boyle's poetry last night."

Leonard sat down in the chair that he thought of as being for visitors and tucked his feet under it. "Yes," he affirmed. "Ah, yes, at Mrs. Cramm's house. A memorial gathering, I believe."

"You believe?" said the young man rudely. "I thought you were the one who read the stuff."

"Oh," said Leonard, "ah—yes, of course, Mr. Hungerford, who had intended to read, felt unable to come."

"You look a little under the weather," the reporter remarked. "Hung?"

"I beg your pardon?" said Leonard.

"I said," said the young man, raising his voice as if Leonard were deaf, "have you a hangover?"

"Oh," said Leonard. "Ah, yes, I dare say I have." A wave of nausea came sweeping down on him like a rip tide. He had only time to say, "Excuse me," in a strangled voice, and dash for the bathroom.

When he came back the young man appeared from the kitchenette carrying in a glass a concoction which resembled some waste product from a surgical operation. "Just swallow this," he said. "It will settle your stomach."

Leonard found himself clutching the glass and swallowing the slick fluid.

"I know just how you feel," said the young man, and producing a notebook and pencil, sat down in Leonard's chair again. "Look, I'm sorry to bother you at such a time, but I've gotta get a *new* angle on this murder before I lose my job. Any ideas?"

"Perhaps," said Leonard timidly, "you could do a piece about the poetry."

"Well," said the young man, "how happy my boss is going to be to get a piece of literary criticism instead of a new suspect, I'll leave you to imagine."

"Perhaps," ventured Leonard, "you may—ah—be able to—ah—supply your—ah—boss with both."

The young man cocked his cropped head. "So?"

"For one thing," said Leonard, "the entire English Department was given to understand that part of the purpose of the gathering was to have a publisher hear Mr. Boyle's poems read. Yet the publisher did not appear, and Mrs. Cramm knew from the beginning that he was not coming. She admitted this to me afterwards. And then I got to thinking about how there was no way I could remember whether the footsteps of the murderer —I heard them, you know—were those of a woman or a man. Now if they had been the footsteps of a—well, a *slender* woman, in high heels, it would have been quite simple to distinguish them from those of a man. But those of a *large* woman, wearing brogues, would have been *very difficult* to distinguish, wouldn't they?

"Boyle used to talk to me a good deal," he went on. "About—ah—women. I was quite conversant with the type he preferred. Among other characteristics were good legs set off by high heels, and willowiness."

"That's what *I* used to say to myself," said the reporter. "Look, are you trying to say you think Mrs. Cramm did Boyle in?"

Leonard was on the verge of telling him that odd remark of Freda Cramm's when, after her other guests had gone that night of the memorial, she had kept him for a final drink. "Personally, I think there are not enough murders," she had said mysteriously. "They feed us in some way." But that queasy feeling was rising again.

"You may make what use you like of my deductions," he said coldly.

The reporter rose. "It doesn't cook. I always knew there was no story in the poetry angle. There isn't any story, and that's the long and the short of it, because there aren't any clues—unless you take this Morrison girl, and I can't take the Morrison girl or I'll lose *my* girl, and I don't think I want to lose my girl," he muttered on in an amazed undertone, "because I *think* I might want to marry her." At the door he turned suddenly. "By the way, Marks, what was that paper you tore up and put in your pocket on the sun porch at Freda Cramm's last night?"

"Paper?" gasped Leonard feebly. Suddenly the room reeled and he fled to the bathroom.

DR. FORSTMANN shook out his trench coat and stood his wet umbrella in a corner of Bainbridge's office. Bainbridge spoke from behind his desk. "How am I going to keep the police from arresting that girl?"

Fortsmann sat down and lit a cigarette. "I suppose we could put a police guard outside her door at the Infirmary."

The president shook his head. "I'd hate that, and so would the trustees. Tell me what you found out from the girl yesterday."

"All right," said Forstmann. "Her father is, as you know, a distinguished painter who is not successful financially. Her mother makes no bones about having married him on the assumption that he would one day be rich." He unzipped the brief case that was on his knees, withdrew a manila folder and began to read from it:

"Morrison evidently felt a good deal of guilt about his own inability to make money, which Molly shared with him. Molly also seems to have gotten the idea that if she had never been born, things would have been easier between her mother and father. She came to college actually dreading to leave home, but feeling that if she did leave relations between her mother and father might become smoother. She is strongly attached to her father, and I should imagine that her feeling for Kevin Boyle was a pretty direct transference of her feelings for her father to a nearer object. Her relations with all women are fearful and inhibited, as a reflection of her dealings with her mother. Her sense of persecution is intense—she imagines she is always being ridiculed, scorned, despised.

"She simply refuses to discuss the confession. I haven't thought it wise to press the point, because I am most interested, at the moment, in building her confidence in me."

"But Julian, the confession is the weapon of the police in the case."

Forstmann replaced the folder, frowning. "What about her diaries?" he asked. "Did you get them?"

Bainbridge shook his head sadly. "Miss Sanders said she turned her room inside out and didn't find anything but school notes and papers. Not even letters from her family. Do try to get some kind of answer from her about the confession today."

"I'll try," said Forstmann. "Meantime, I think you should conduct a recheck on anyone who might possibly give her an alibi—see if anyone definitely saw her at the time of the murder. So far as I can see, that's her only real hope, other than having someone else confess to the murder."

"If all else fails, I may as well do that myself," said the president gloomily, helping Forstmann into his sodden coat.

The doctor drove to the Infirmary. He found Molly lying propped on pillows, staring aimlessly out of the window. While he talked to her she rolled her head from side to side. "I don't care!" she wept. "I don't care what happens to me."

Finally he rose and reached for his coat. Suddenly he sneezed.

"You have a cold. You shouldn't run around without rubbers," she said softly. "You're worse than my father."

He stopped in the midst of thrusting his arm through a sleeve, then made himself go on calmly. "All the same," he said, "I wish you could have told me about the confession, Molly."

"All right," she said, almost inaudibly. "I didn't kill him. Of course, I didn't. But I might as well have. And it doesn't make any difference."

He strove to keep his voice even. "Where were you at the time the murder was being committed, Molly?"

"I went back to the house and stayed there all evening," she whispered.

"All right, Molly," he said gently. "That's all. Good girl." Quietly he let himself out the door.

Good old transference, he thought as he strode out of the Infirmary to his car.

AS he pushed the big door of the college library open and stiffened himself to brave the rain, George Hungerford met Leonard Marks coming in.

"Hullo," he said, and twisted out a wry friendly smile. "I've been hearing how well you read at the memorial meeting for Kevin." He added, "Wonder who's to be your new neighbor in Kevin's rooms. I don't imagine there'll be any difficulty in finding a tenant for them." He felt his face contract for the tic. I'm tired, he thought. I must get home and rest.

"I wish," said Leonard with humble hopelessness, "that *you'd* move in there, sir. It's an awfully good apartment —sunny and all, and the fireplace."

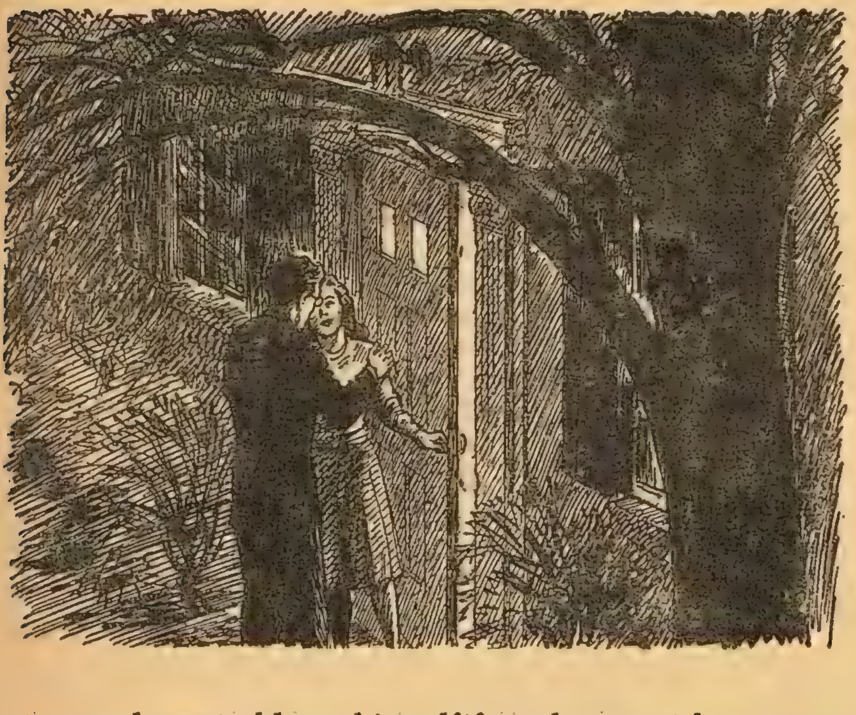
Hungerford smiled. "I'm pretty well off where I am. It's a gloomy old place, but it suits me, somehow. Give me a ring and drop in to see me one of these days." And he was off in the downpour. God, he thought, he'll probably come.

Sometimes rainy days carried to Hungerford childhood recollections of staying indoors by the fire, of reading three and four novels in a day, of having his mother surprise him with a tray of cocoa and cookies as he sat curled in the old wing chair. She had liked the rain days too, shutting the two of them off from the world.

"I wanted a little girl," she had confided to him. "That was before I knew how nice a little boy could be." A neurotic, sex-terrified widow, almost insane in her withdrawal from the world. He recognized the irreparable damages her strangeness had wrought in his spirit. Yet how was he ever to explain to anyone, ever, the vivid pure pleasure of their companionship, the mutual harbor of their love?

In his apartment, he snapped on the lamp on his desk. The blotter was neat and vacant; all at once his heart began to pound and he could not catch his breath. He became aware that all his memories of protection had been a barrier erected against fear—the fear that he would find the notebook awaiting his return.

He sat down in his armchair, slumped over like an old man, panting. Fear. Was he afraid of death? No. Guilt. Of what was he guilty? His breath began to come in heaving, audible gasps. He hid his face in his hands. Of nothing—nothing but his mother's death. And yet it was pure madness to blame himself for what must have come with or without him one day . . . Ah, but he had left her; gone abroad to write on a fellowship, while she lay pierced and gasping with pneumonia in the bitter New England damp. Since that day, when the cable reached him, he had not written another word. For three years now he had been nothing but a living corpse, waiting to be buried.



As if to purge one pain by inflicting another, he rose, went abruptly to the desk, drew out the notebook. Slowly he dropped into the swivel chair at his desk and read.

Nov. 5: George Hungerford went to Kevin Boyle's tonight. He sat down by his fire and put his feet on his fender. He talked to Kevin Boyle about his work. Oh, says he, in his whining meaching voice. You must get away from here. For the sake of your work, he said. Hoh! I come too, I knock at the door, I beat on the window. Oh, Kevin Boyle! I cry, but George Hungerford will not let my voice be heard. He is all Go Away, and For the Sake of Your Work. Old hypocrite! I will finish *you. . . .*

Hungerford's hands were shaking when he laid the brown-covered notebook on the desk. He rose and paced the floor, trying to remember how the discovery of each new entry in the journal had come about. They occurred on his return from supper, which he usually ate downtown. It would also be possible for the girl—or woman—to enter the room while he took his regular afternoon nap, but this he had dismissed as improbable. The writer sometimes referred to herself in the third person, calling herself Eloise. This made him tremble in his deepest being—Eloise was the name of his sister, who had died when she was six months old, before he was born.

How long was it to go on? How long must he bear it? Something must be done—before . . .

He went to the telephone and thumbed clumsily through the college directory, then dialed a number.

"Hullo," he said breathlessly, at last. "Hullo, Marks? This is Hungerford. Look, I wondered if you would do me a favor. Speak to the landlady for me about Boyle's apartment. On thinking over your suggestion it seemed it might not be a bad idea to make the change."

KATE INNES sat at her desk staring at an open copy of the *Messenger.* WHAT HAS BECOME OF THE MORRISON CLUE the headline read—not a big headline or on the front page, but still, there it was in plain view. It didn't have the local dateline, and it was mostly a rehash of old stuff—no mention of the confession. But who else could have written it? She took off her glasses, put her head down on her arms, and began to cry. How could he be such a heel?

The electric buzzer in her room rang, meaning that she had a caller, who was, she judged, the man from the printer's here with galley proofs of the December *Holly.* She went thudding down the stairs to the front hall.

Jack stood there, looking somehow dejected. Kate stopped halfway down the last flight of stairs. She said very distinctly, "I don't want to talk to you."

"Yes, you do," he said, without smiling. "Go put your face on and we'll go somewhere."

She was back on the landing when he called after her, "Would it make you feel better if I said I'd lost my job?"

She turned and looked back at him. "When?"

"I lost it after I turned in a piece of literary criticism on Kevin Boyle's poetry. The story you're sore about was written by a colleague who was more willing to ride along with the boss. Now will you go fix your face for me?" he grinned.

"Yeah," she said, flushing, "yeah!" and turned to fly up the stairs when he caught her on the landing and kissed her resoundingly.

"Take those damn pants off," he said, smacking the logical place, "and drop them in the nearest incinerator!"

In something more than a jiffy, Kate reappeared, looking respectable in sweater, skirt, and cosmetics. She took her polo coat from the coat rack and they went out the door in silence. When they were in the car, Jack said, "I'll have to be going back to New York."

"You could work for the paper here," said Kate.

"Not and start saving for Junior," he replied, looking at her so meaningfully that they almost caromed into a traffic light. After this they drove soberly to the hotel.

It had stopped raining, but the wind ripped around the street corners. As Kate and Jack dove into the hotel they ran into a man coming out, head bent to meet the blast.

"Why," gasped Kate, "that was Mr. Marks and he was pie-eyed!"

"Drunk as a skunk," said Jack cheerfully.

They sat down in a booth in the taproom, and Jack ordered two whiskies with soda. "Beers," said Kate firmly. "This is not on the expense account."

"That's my little woman," said Jack, grinning idiotically.

"Marks," she said pensively. "Leonard Marks."

"Shall I let you in on my secret theory?" asked Jack rhetorically. "I'm suspicious of that guy. I went to see him last Saturday morning, after a cold night spent on a sun porch where I was so adequately heated that I failed to catch even the slightest sniffle."

"Shut up," said Kate. "Go on."

"I said I wanted to get some dope on the poetry, which, as a matter of fact, was the God's truth—I wanted anything I could put down on paper that didn't include Molly Morrison."

Kate blushed. "You're very sweet," she said primly.

When he finished the account of his visit she shook her head.

"My money's on Freda Cramm. Look at her—she's a big battle-ax who could wield a poker, she's a woman of violent emotions, she hung around Boyle, she has no alibi—Oh! I forgot to tell you that Molly Morrison has an alibi! I found it out at supper tonight, and passed it along to Miss Sanders. Honey Sacheveral saw Molly in the corridor outside her room between five thirty and six the day of the murder. She couldn't have walked over to

Kevin Boyle's place in time to have conked him. Not conceivably."

"I should telephone the boss—my ex-boss! I would, too, if I thought he'd reverse the charges for me," said Jack dazedly.

"Well, gee," said Kate, "oughtn't you really? I mean, isn't it sort of a scoop? You'd probably get your job back."

"Yeah," said Jack, "and get stuck in it for the rest of my life. I believe in fate or something."

"Don't tell me you're now free to write the great American novel," said Kate suspiciously.

"Not at all," snapped Jack. "I'm just tired of being a sob sister, and also of administering digitalis to the entire staff every time the New Deal is mentioned."

"All right, dear," soothed Kate meekly.

Jack leaned across the table, grinning like a monkey. "Baby, you're wonderful."

"Everybody was concealing mysterious papers," she mused after a moment's silence. "Leonard with whatever it was he tore up, and Molly with her notebooks. Honey said she was carrying an armful of them downstairs toward the back door, as if she were taking them to the trash baskets there. And she could ill afford to burn class notes when she was flunking four out of five subjects."

She drained her glass and Jack looked at the clock. "It's ten of ten," he said. "We'll have to start back if I'm going to have a chance to kiss you before lights-out."

"O.K.," said Kate, roseate.

They drove through the quiet streets to the quadrangle and stopped. At ten fourteen they drew apart, and Kate pushed the handle of the door. But Jack caught her face in one hand and forcibly turned her jaw toward him. She tried unsuccessfully to wiggle away. "Look at me," he said, and she deliberately shut her eyes. "Seems I'm in love with you."

There was a silence, in which a window rattled up in its frame and the electric bells in the dormitories could faintly be heard sounding curfew. "Seems it's mutual," she said at last, and ran into the house.

A KNOCK sounded at George Hungerford's door. "Come in!" he called cheerfully.

The door, made of panes of frosted glass, opened, revealing Leonard Marks' putty face. "I stopped by to see if I could lend a hand."

"That's awfully good of you, but I'm just about to leave for class," said Hungerford.

"I have an eleven o'clock too. The College Hall clock just struck ten thirty."

"In that case sit down," said Hungerford. "Have a cigarette."

Marks cleared himself a space on the book-crowded sofa. His nervousness began to make Hungerford nervous. "Moving is hell," he said. "I'm taking it very slowly, like a convalescent. Yesterday, the actual removal of my belongings occurred. I saw them well strewn over the living room floor, paid the movers, and promptly went to sleep."

"You must have been pretty irritated by your caller," said Marks, smiling.

"But I had no caller. What made you think I did?"

"I didn't mean to be inquisitive." Marks clasped his hands nervously. "I heard her voice."

Hungerford's knees buckled, his face twitched violently, and he sat down, his hands dangling between his knees.

"What time did you hear it?"

"It must have been just about six when I got home."

"Six," said Hungerford dully. "Ordinarily I take my nap at six. Yesterday I was done in and lay down at twenty minutes of, or so. I must have been completely out by six o'clock. It's a pretty heavy dose of sedative I take."

"You mean," gasped Leonard, "that somebody was in your apartment while you were asleep?"

Hungerford rubbed his hand across and across his forehead. At last he rose, warily, and went to a carton that stood in a corner beside the books. The string which had tied it hung loose about it. "I left it tied," Hungerford muttered. "I know I left it tied. And who would have known which—"

The papers that filled it were disordered, as if someone had gone through them, and on top lay what he had carefully packed at the bottom, the limp brown cardboard notebook. He held it at arm's length.

"Look in it!" he ordered Leonard. "See if there's an entry dated with yesterday's date!" He felt the notebook removed from his fingers, and buried his face in his hands.

"Yes, sir," Leonard's answer came to his ears, "there is."

"Oh, God!" said Hungerford, standing with his hands still over his eyes. "Ever since the school year began, that journal has been turning up in my rooms. It's a form of persecution—"

"But Mr. Hungerford!" cried Leonard Marks, "why don't you show it to the police?"

"Look at it," said Hungerford wearily. "Glance through it. You'll see why I might not care to."

Hesitantly, Leonard began to read. His face blanched and his lips parted. Then he slapped the book shut and rose from the sofa, came and leaned urgently over Hungerford's chair. "Look, sir. This can't go on. But now there'll be two of us to catch her."

THE winter sun was nearing the horizon, salmon colored among violet clouds, promising snow. For a moment Molly looked up from her brown moccasins, her cold bare legs; it seemed to her the world was turned to a vast, ominous, but beautiful dream landscape. The white frame houses took on a luminousness in the evening light. She walked faster. If she got to where she meant to go, warmed herself with a fire, perhaps, and talked—the kind of talk she longed for so, then everything would not seem so threatening and evil.

"Courage!" she whispered to herself, and turned up the walk. The bell at the high double door was the sort you have to pull. She heard it pealing. Finally the door opened and an old, old woman peered out.

"Please," said Molly faintly, "is Mr. Hungerford in?"

"Doesn't live here any more," said the old woman.

"Oh, please!" cried Molly, "can you tell me where he lives?"

"He moved in where that young man lived who got murdered. I don't recollect the number." She closed the door.

He lived at Kevin Boyle's house. It was beautiful—like a gift! Now she could go, could ring his bell, could go in the room where he had stood, had lain . . . lain dead.

As she walked on she had no choice but to think of the thing that had brought her out. It was something she could not understand, something terrible. In the last days she had forgotten Kevin Boyle. She had forgotten the way he looked. Or how it felt to walk to The Coffee Shoppe with your heart exploding like electric shocks because you did not know if he would be there. Or how it was in class, watching him talk, seeing the way his hands moved. She could remember *that* it had been, but *how* it had been was gone.

She was at the corner There was a hedge full of red berries, running along by the walk. Then the house. His name was still on the card tacked over the bell. She pushed it desperately, and closed her eyes. She heard the door open and looked quickly. There was Mr. Hungerford, his thick gray hair rumpled, his tie loosened, his face haggard.

"I'm Molly Morrison. I'm the girl who . . ." She trailed off.

"Oh," he said, "yes, of course. Come right in." He acted as if he had been waiting for her.

"Here," he said, in Kevin Boyle's room, "take your coat off. Pull up to the fire. Are you one of my students? Though you don't have to be one of my students to call on me!" He gave a little laugh. "I'm delighted to have a strange young woman in . . . my . . ." His words trailed off strangely. He was looking off into space as if something were behind her shoulder, as if he were haunted.

"Mr. Hungerford," she said. "I'll go away. I didn t know students weren't supposed—"

"My goodness, no!" he said. "Take your coat off like a good girl and tell me what it is you want. Tell you what, let's have a glass of sherry." He did not wait for her answer, but took a decanter from the top of a bookcase and filled two of the glasses that stood by it. She took off her coat and laid it on the couch, then sat down on a stool close to the fire. She stared at the hearth. On these bricks Kevin Boyle had lain. His blood had flowed here. . . . "Here's your sherry," said Mr. Hungerford's voice.

"Thank you," she said, taking it.

He pulled forward the chair opposite her and sat down. "Now," he said, raising the glass in silent toast. She sipped, staring at him. His face was so drawn, so weary. He looked at her, waiting for her to go on, she knew, but she was unable . . . "What class are you—shall I call you Miss Morrison, or Molly?"

"Oh, Molly, of course," she said. How kind he was! "I'm a Freshman. I was in—I was—" she wanted to say she had been in a class of Kevin Boyle's, but her voice broke.

"And you aren't in any of my classes, but you came to see me—is it a guessing game?" His patience was going to end in a moment. She gathered herself together frightenedly.

"I've been in the Infirmary. They seem to think—I've been acting—they think I'm rather unbalanced. I may be, you know," she ended earnestly.

He laughed, startling her. "That makes a pair of us, Molly. We should be friends."

She said then, "I wanted everything to go right when I came to college—I wanted to be different, to make people like me, not be shy. But they hated me, and laughed at me, and then when—when Mr. Boyle died—" She put her face down in her hands and cried.

A GLASS crashed on the bricks of the hearth, and she looked up. The whole side of his face was drawn together in the most grotesque way—it was so strange and horrifying it almost shocked you to laughter.

She got to her feet nervously. "I came," she said, "because I heard him—I heard Mr. Boyle say once you had some poems of his. I came to ask—I came—" She was shaking all over.

On the other side of the fire, Mr. Hungerford got to his feet. The tic left his face, but left it different, slacker, in strange new lines. His posture changed; everything was different. She thought, quite carefully, I am going mad. Instead of the sad worn intelligence so like her father's that had first clothed his face, she now saw on his features the fierce peering cruelty of her mother—the slack jowls, the drawn brow . . . She slung her coat over her shoulders, keeping her eyes on him. "I'll just—" she said. "I'd better go now, I don't—I'm not feeling very —you'll excuse . . ."

"Why," said a strange voice, coming from she knew not where, "you little—it was you—" She closed her eyes. Hands were at her throat. Her own hands were wrestling at them—or was it her own hands at her throat? A fingernail drew a thin line of pain over her wrist. Back and forth she was battered. "Oh, Mr. Hungerford!" she gasped.

Then at last she was loose. Something had fallen to the floor—someone—an inert lump. She flung open the door and fled.

KATE entered the gloom of the taproom, where Jack promptly popped out of a booth. "Hello, gorgeous," he said, winking elaborately, "we've got company."

When she came around the back of the booth, she perceived Mr. Marks, drooping low over the table, hiccupping gently.

"Good God!" she said, *sotto voce,* clutching Jack's arm, and then loud, "Good evening, Mr. Marks."

"Mum mum mum," said Leonard Marks, then suddenly straightened and threw his arms wide. "Good evening," he enunciated, clearly and loudly. Then he relapsed to his former posture. "Mum."

Jack gave Kate a rather hideous wink. "Mr. Marks seems to have a bit of dope on the murder."

"Oh, now listen," said Kate, "fun's fun, but do you have to go digging up old dead murders *every* night? I'm sick to death of it."

"Just keep listening, pet, and a very interesting saga will be unraveled—has been about three times already, and each time it starts over, it has a little something added."

"For heaven's sake get him coffee, before he's out like a light. Look at him!"

Leonard's face leaned closer and closer to the initial-carved table top. His eyelids drooped. Jack slid out of the booth to run after the waitress.

Suddenly Leonard hoisted himself a notch and looked straight though blearily at Kate. " 'Thy ruddy breasts, thy rosy thighs, thy snowy flesh incarnadine!' "

Kate turned perfectly scarlet and edged toward the end of the booth. "I beg your pardon?"

Jack reappeared, carrying the cup of coffee himself. "Here you are!" he cried briskly. "Swallow this down fast, and you'll feel like a new man!"

Obediently Leonard drank the whole cup down, steaming as it was. Sweat erupted on his brow.

"Now," said Jack, businesslike,, "you were going to tell me something about Mrs. Cramm."

"Oh," groaned Leonard, "it all began that dreadful night, that dreadful, evil night!"

"Which night?" chorused Jack and Kate.

Leonard sank his face in his hands. "The night of the reading. Kevin Boyle's poetry. . ."

"What's it got to do with—with Freda Cramm?" Jack asked irritably.

Leonard raised his face and peered at Jack and Kate. "It was the beginning of everything," he pronounced. "That poem. About thy rosy thighs. It was in with Kevin Boyle's. I'm sure *she* read it. *He* read it. They laughed at it. I found it there the night of the reading. I didn't find it until I was right in the middle of the reading. There it was, between two of *his.* I shifted it to the bottom." He paused and panted a moment, then looked at Jack with bloodhound eyes. "You remember when you came to my place? You asked me what was the paper I tore up on Freda Cramm's sunporch. *That* was what I tore up."

"*What* was what you tore up?" demanded Jack.

"That poem. I wrote it. Oh," Leonard sobbed brokenly, "I'm so ashamed. One should never be—never be *carnal!* I can't tell you how awful it makes me feel. It's so—so *private.*"

"Not at all," soothed Kate in womanly tones. "You mustn't feel you're the only sinner in a pure world—you know better."

"Oh, I know," sighed Leonard. "Boyle could do it. Boyle could—get away with it. But I'm different. It's like—I guess it's the way Mr. Hungerford feels about that journal."

"What journal?" said Jack, beckoning to the waitress with his empty beer mug.

"The one Freda Cramm writes and puts in his room."

"*What?*" cried Jack and Kate simultaneously.

"Yes," said Leonard. "Didn't I tell you? I'm *sure* she murdered Boyle now. And she's trying to drive Hungerford insane. She breaks into his room and writes a journal. Just an ordinary notebook—full of—evil!"

HUNGERFORD sat by his fire in an old dressing gown, unwashed, unshaven. Every now and then he was taken with fits of shivering. The grippe, Leonard Marks said, and tried to persuade him to go to bed. But it was not the grippe, and he would not go to bed. He shivered and shook, he was nauseated with dread, he could not bear to be alone, but what it was, how it had come about, that he could not—or would not—conjecture. Since yesterday. Whatever it was had come up yesterday. And he simply could not remember.

Leonard was expostulating, "Why don't you go to bed and have a hot water bottle and that sedative you—"

A force like a hand at the scruff of his neck, lifted Hungerford to his feet. "No!" he was amazed to hear himself shout.

And suddenly he thought of the girl who had been here yesterday, and an entire scene reappeared in his memory. He would like to talk to *her* now. Though for what purpose he could hardly say. He felt that she was a key to his disturbance of today.

"Go along, go along, Marks!" he cried, his tongue finally loosened. "You have a class, I know, and I assure you I'm *quite* all right. I tell you, I wish you'd put a note on the blackboard that I won't be meeting English 24 this morning."

And Leonard left, looking a little frightened, a little worried, a little relieved.

Later the doorbell rang. Hungerford rose and went to the window. A girl was standing at the door with her back to him. She wore a nondescript tweed coat, the usual socks and moccasins. For the life of him he could not recollect ever having seen her. Just as he was about to let the blind fall back against the window, she turned. He rushed to throw the door open. It was she—same face, same heavy bang, same frightened eyes. He shouted joyously, "Come in!"

She followed him, stood in front of the fire as she had yesterday. "Mr. Hungerford, I *had* to see you," she said, her gray eyes clouded with anxiety. "I've run away from the Infirmary. They really—now they really think I'm crazy. You have to tell me what happened yesterday!"

The strength went from his legs and he had to sit down. "You mean you don't remember?"

"Oh," she said, "I *think* I do. But it's all a hallucination. At least, I thought it was a hallucination. Dr. Forstmann thought so too, when I told him this morning. He told the nurse not to let me out. But then I found this—" she thrust her hand out toward him.

He looked down at the angry-looking scratch running across the back. "I don't understand," he muttered.

"Then," she said dully, "there was nothing. I *am* crazy."

She started to move toward the door, her shoulders sunken. "No!" he cried. "Don't go! Tell me what it is you thought you remembered!"

She came back into the room. Her eyes filled with tears, but she blinked them back. "I don't know if I can tell you."

"You must!" he urged. "Tell me everything that happened after you came here! I can't remember a thing."

She sat down in the chair opposite his and began, "I came here and you were very nice to me. You gave me a glass of sherry. Somehow you looked like my father, and I liked you very much. But then all of a sudden you looked different to me, and I closed my eyes and someone was choking me—or I imagined it—and then I ran away. I thought it was all a dream and that I was really mad, and I told Dr. Forstmann; only this morning, I found the scratch on my hand. Now I couldn't have scratched myself because—" she blushed—"I bite my fingernails so. So I thought that—I imagined that might be a kind of evidence that something had really—oh, and I forgot. I heard a voice. It wasn't you. It was like a woman's voice, only deep."

"She was here!" he said aloud, without meaning to. "What's your name?"

"Molly Morrison." Her lower lip began to quiver.

"Molly," he said, "you're not mad, I think it was quite real." He rose and began to pace the room. "I think—I think I'm going to find other evidence which will convince Dr. Forstmann. Go back to the Infirmary. I'll telephone him today."

She rose, looking bewildered, on the brink of tears. "But—" she began—"I have to know—"

Suddenly he was in a frenzy to have her out, to have her gone, to know for himself. "You will!" he cried. "Now run along like a good child! I'll call Dr. Forstmann within an hour." On an impulse, he went to her and kissed her cheek. "I will, Molly, I promise." Then she was gone.

Feverishly he jerked a whole row of books off the shelf and was scrabbling for—ah, he had it! He turned the brown cardboard cover and riffled wildly through the pages, the big scrawl staring up at him. There it was. Yesterday's date. It began:

And she came here, the little bitch, and how brazenly she faces up to me and says, Give me his poems. Ah, I cried, so it was you! And I took her by the throat, and I shook her like a dog in a fight, yes, in another minute I would have snapped her skinny little neck, but she broke away. Oh, the next time will I not succeed, the next time . . .

Then unconsciousness overtook him.

When he came to, someone was dabbing at his face with a wet cloth. Slowly he became aware of Leonard Marks. "Leonard," he said faintly but urgently, "now you can call a doctor. Telephone Dr. Julian Forstmann." And as he closed his eyes it seemed strange to him that his first thought should have been of vindicating the little girl instead of calling the police, protecting himself.

ON Freda Cramm's doorstep stood two youthful callers, a very intense looking young man and a roly-poly girl who, she realized in a moment, was Miss Innes, the editor of *The Holly*.

"Hullo," said Freda agreeably. "What can I do for you?"

"We'd just like to have a word with you, Mrs. Cramm," said the young man as they crossed the threshold.

They refused to lay their coats as she indicated, refused to sit down when they came into the living room. They had a strange look about them as they stared at her. "What in the world is the matter with you?" she snapped at last. "You're staring at me as if I showed definite symptoms of smallpox or something. Is my slip showing?"

"Mrs. Cramm," said the young man after a dramatic pause, "I'm Jack Donelly of the *Messenger*. I have a couple of questions I'd like answered about what you were doing in Kevin Boyle's rooms the night we saw you."

She refused to lower her dignity by lying. "I was looking for a letter I had left there," she threw at the reporter. "I had left it there one day when I left Mr. Boyle's place in a rage because I'd had a fight with him. It was a letter from a poor relative of my late husband's, dunning me for money. Now you know as much as I do, and you may go, because I consider you fantastically impertinent and you are imposing on my hospitality. Miss Innes, I intend to speak to President Bainbridge about your collaboration with the press in a matter which he plainly does not want discussed in print." As she talked, she grew angrier. What a pair of brats!

The young man was looking at her as if he fancied himself a judge leaning down to lecture the prisoner at the bar. "And that was not your *last* visit to his apartment," he enunciated, in the manner of a district attorney in a Grade B movie.

"No, it was not. I was at his rooms again on the night of November 17, as you just pointed out, looking for the letter I had left there. I hardly see how this can be of interest to your paper, Mr. Donelly."

"But you have been back there more recently—*much* more recently!"

"No," said Freda, with rising asperity, "I have not. I think you'd better go, now." She raised one eyebrow and stared at them in her most quelling manner. Miss Innes shrank slightly, and pulled at the young man's elbow, but he stood his ground.

Suddenly, looking at both of them, at their pale tense faces, Donelly's long and irregular, the girl's perfectly round, both of them with identical horn-rimmed glasses sliding down their very different noses, she wanted to laugh at them. "You're behaving like utter babies," she said amiably, "but I'm so agreeable as to offer you a glass of sherry. Come on, sit down and tell me what this nonsense is all about."

The Innes child had the grace to blush very red, but the reporter squared his jaw. "What have you got against George Hungerford? Does he know too much?"

"George Hungerford?" she repeated blankly.

At that moment the girl gave a gasp and pointed to the desk. "Look," she half whispered, "look, Jack, it's just like—"

Freda followed her finger, but saw only a mess of envelopes, returned checks, and miscellany that she had just been sorting. But Donelly dived at the desk and brought forth a brown cardboard notebook containing her monthly accounts.

"Here!" she yelled, "what the hell do you think you're doing, rooting through my private papers? You get out of here before I call the police!"

The young man was thumbing through her book. "Oh," he said weakly. "Is this your writing?"

"Of course it's my writing!" she said irritably, but unable to maintain her fury because of her growing curiosity. "What did you think it was?"

"It doesn't prove a thing!" he cried. "Anybody can change his writing. I'll just hang onto this. An expert—"

"Look," said Freda. "I won't call the police. I won't tell Bainbridge on Miss Innes. But will you for God's sake sit down and tell me what this is all about?"

"Where were you between five and six the afternoon of November 21?" rapped the reporter.

DELIBERATELY, Freda set down the sherry glasses, went to her desk, and extracted an engagement pad. "I was," she enunciated slowly, "at a meeting of the Library Committee in Room 31 of College Hall. There are five other members of the committee, all of whom were present and will undoubtedly vouch for my presence."

The two looked at each other for a moment and sidled toward the sofa, sitting on the edge. She handed them each a glass of sherry and sat down herself.

"Well," said Miss Innes resignedly, "I guess it'll just have to be chalked up to reading too many detective stories. But honestly, Mrs. Cramm, you looked like such a good suspect."

"Someone had been systematically persecuting Mr. Hungerford," said Donelly seriously. "Some one who was —ah—rather intimate with Boyle. Hungerford won't go to the police about the thing, because the persecution takes the form of a journal which is planted in his room, full of—well, scurrilous statements about him."

"Why in the world should *I* want to make scurrilous statements about George Hungerford, of all people?" said Freda in puzzlement. "And if I did, why should I take the trouble to put them in a journal in his room?"

"The story about the fight you and Mr. Hungerford had before he went to the sanitarium was campus gossip," Kate Innes said. "Nobody knew just what it was about, or whether it was a real grudge, or just that he was going off his rocker. And then this person who wrote the journal was a woman. She called herself Eloise. And she—she seemed—that is, she must have known Mr. Boyle pretty well—wrote about it in the journal. And then Mr. Marks heard her. He said—" she stopped and blushed— "well, he *said* she sounded just like you."

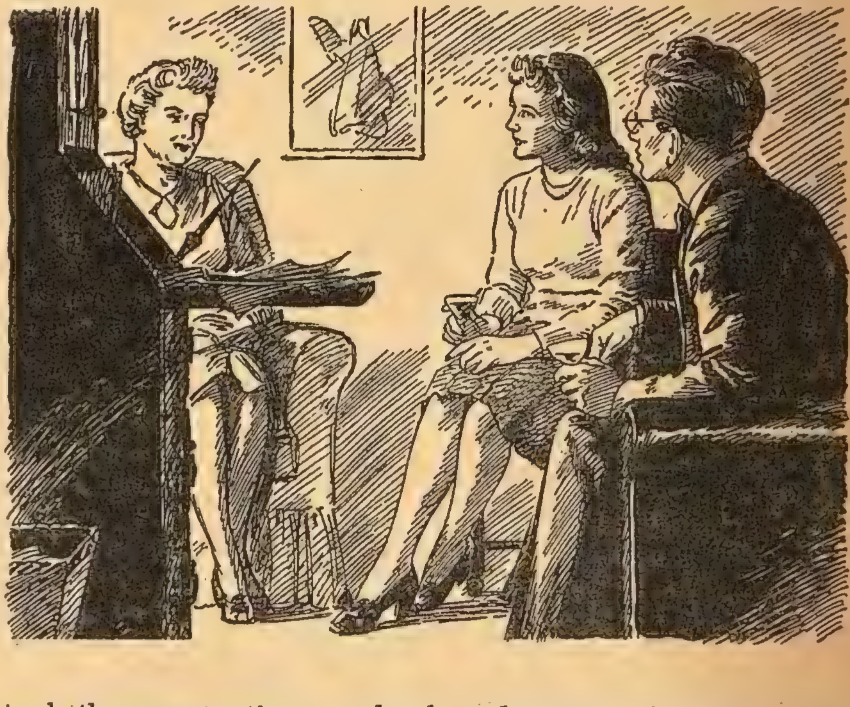
"How in the world did Leonard hear a voice in Hungerford's apartment?" said Freda. "Does he hang about the halls of that fantastic mansion waiting for Hungerford to appear?"

"Fantastic mansion?" said Kate. "But didn't you know —Mr. Hungerford moved to Kevin Boyle's apartment? Just to escape the journal, he told Mr. Marks. And then it followed him—even there! Maybe *especially* there! The woman actually gets into his rooms to write the thing!"

Freda was galvanized into action. She flew out to the coat closet and put on her coat. Then she whisked back to the living room and beckoned to the an[illegible]d couple there. "Come along," she said. "You were q[illegible]right to feel some action should be taken. All this should have been in the hands of the police long ago. I'm going to George Hungerford's and get that journal!"

LEONARD got him to bed, but by a ruse, he persauded Leonard to leave. He promised to go to sleep. He said he would not be able to sleep if he knew Leonard was in the other room. He pleaded that after all Leonard would be just across the hall where he could easily hear him, and in any case the doctor would be here in a half hour or so. But after Leonard finally left, protesting and casting regretful backward looks, he crept from his bed like a naughty child and locked his outer door.

At last he dressed. He felt he must dress. He shaved, cutting himself—his hands shook. He put a cigarette in his mouth and tried to light a match. Three times he could not strike the box, and when the little stick caught flame at last, he singed his eyebrow and did not touch the cigarette. He gave it up. He paced and paced the living room with an uneven gait. In some far off inner cavern of his brain where self-observation still resided, he knew he was beside himself. But outwardly he felt a queer joy in his own wildness, illness, madness. He took the persecuting notebook and tore out half its pages, scattering them about the room.



He went back through the bedroom, pitching against the bed, steadying himself against the footrail. He clasped the edge of the basin and guided his hand to the knob of the medicine chest. By what feat of control he knew not, he extracted one of the sleeping capsules, separated its transparent halves, spilled out a little of the powder, and swallowed the rest. Then he went back to the living room and sat down by the fire. He rocked back and forth in the wing chair, his head in his hands, simply because he could not be still. Suddenly he was roused by a pain in his foot. He looked down and saw his slipper smoking with heat, his foot almost in the fire. He began to laugh, but his laughter turned to tears. On the hearth . . . a black curly head, pillowed boyishly on a folded arm. . . .

Then the doorbell buzzed. He twitched to his feet, jerked down his jacket, smoothed a hand over his hair.

"Sit down," he said, when he had ushered Forstmann in, his voice cracked, his hand making a tense upward gesture.

Slowly, gravely, the psychiatrist took his place to one side of the fire, and Hungerford sat opposite.

"I wanted to talk to you," he said, very slowly and carefully. "It's about that little patient of yours—that little girl—Molly Morrison—is that her name? Strange, I couldn't remember it earlier. Now it's come back."

"Yes, Molly Morrison," said the doctor, twitching at his trouser leg. "She told me about coming to you. I couldn't make much of it. I'd be very much obliged if you could throw some light on the matter."

Hungerford said slowly, "I must tell you that I am unable to [illegible] a clear account of what happened the day she—th[illegible]y she first came here, because I seem to have suffere[illegible] attack of amnesia for the period of her visit. Nevertheless," he pushed on, "I have reason to believe there actually was an attempt made on the girl's life. Just as she described it."

He chose his words very carefully. "All during this year someone has been persecuting me. A woman named Eloise."

Again he had to stop. Why was it so hard?

"An acquaintance?" asked Forstmann. "Someone whom you believe has reason to dislike you?"

"She's my sister," blurted Hungerford, and then began to titter. "How silly! I mean to say, she has the same name as a sister who died before my birth. Which leads me to believe this person must know a *great* deal about me—a great deal more than I can explain. I have no idea of who it is."

"What did you say her name was?"

"Eloise," said Hungerford. As he said the name, he suddenly knew what she must look like. Like an idiot girl who had lived in the town where he grew up. Huge and hulking, built like a fat adolescent boy, with big flat feet and a strange walk, little pig's eyes . . .

"What form does this persecution take?" said Forstmann matter-of-factly.

Hungerford rose from his chair. He gathered up the notebook and its leaves and handed them to Forstmann. "A journal," he said. "A journal which has been appearing in my rooms ever since the beginning of the college year. I have come to believe this woman must have had something to do with Kevin Boyle's murder. And now that she has made this attempt on the little girl . . ." Suddenly his face contorted in the tic.

Forstmann was thumbing through the notebook. "If you believed this had to do with the murder," he said thoughtfully, "why didn't you show it to the police?"

The tic was doing a new thing. Instead of contracting only his face, it seemed to have taken hold of one whole side of his head, even of his brain, and was squeezing tighter and tighter. "Read—it—" he forced out. "I—couldn't."

He could see Forstmann's eyes staring at him. He heard his own words only faintly. His lungs were breathless, he was slipping sidewise into space, his face contorting sidewise, his whole being changing, altering, crying out, Mother! like a dying man. Faintly, through the roar surrounding him, he heard Dr. Forstmann's matter-of-fact voice saying, "And you have no idea who the writer might possibly be?" And then. . . .

"Of course I have," said the voice irritably. "I wrote it myself."

"I thought you said you didn't know who wrote it," Forstmann said very quietly.

"Not at all," said the voice. "I said no such thing. *He* did."

The sun was pouring through the windows behind the chair where George Hungerford sat so that his face was dim in the shadow of the wing chair. But Forstmann could see that the tic had abated, leaving the face curiously lax, drained of all the tragedy and intelligence that made it so admirable ordinarily.

"Who is *he*?" Forstmann asked, as quietly as he knew how.

"Hoh," said the voice scornfully, "our Georgie. George Hungerford, who else?"

"And who are you?" asked Forstmann, scarcely above a whisper.

"Why I'm little sister Eloise," simpered the voice, nearly falsetto now, issuing from George Hungerford's mouth.

BAINBRIDGE sat at his desk, his head in his hands. "Please God," he remarked devoutly, "don't let the newspapers get hold of this."

"I see no reason why they should," said Forstmann. "I see no reason why the police should, either. Let the whole thing simply dribble off. Hungerford is in a place where he can't do anyone any harm anyway—there's no reason why he should be taken out of the State Hospital for the Insane, tried, and put back in again. And since he is in a condition which could legally be attested to as insane, there's actually no further evidence that he murdered Kevin Boyle than there was before."

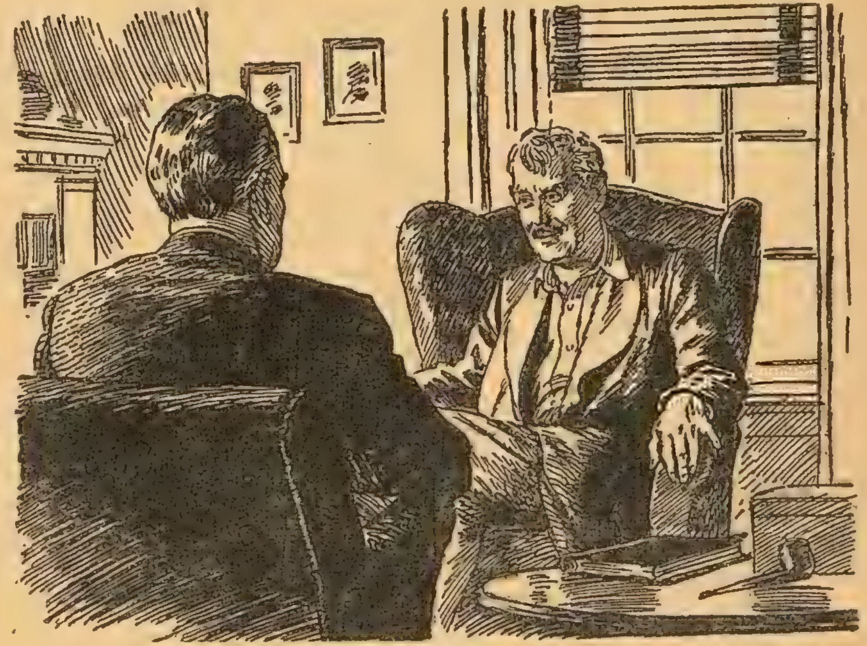
"Yet you're convinced that he did?" said Bainbridge curiously, lifting his head.

"Or that *she* did," said Forstmann. He shook his head incredulously. "Honestly, Bainbridge, this case has Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde looking like malingerers. I've had Hungerford under observation for two weeks. I have placed him under narcotics about once a day. Each time I do so, the second personality—Eloise, as she calls herself—"

"Eloise!" exclaimed Bainbridge disgustedly.

Forstmann sat forward. "That's one of the most fascinating sidelights on the whole thing. In his waking state—or in the role of George Hungerford—he is unable to remember any of the history that obviously gives rise to the second personality—Eloise. But in the guise of Eloise, he tells a perfectly connected story about how as a small child his mother called him by the name of the sister who died in infancy, dressed him in girl's clothes.

"I always had a great admiration for Hungerford and his work. When I went to see him that day the first thing I thought was what a noble sort of head he has—like a Roman medallion. He was obviously extremely confused and on the border of some manic state. But when I heard that eerie falsetto voice coming out of his mouth, saying, 'I'm Eloise,' I must confess that my hair rose on my head."



"He's had a double personality all this time and it never came out before? How is that?"

"I would take a guess that there may previously have been some sort of minor somnambulistic state in which she appeared, but never with the same distinctions as after his return from the sanitarium when he began to use a sedative to put him to sleep in the afternoons. It's possible that the reason for his insomnia at night was a feeling that Eloise was more out of his control than ever before, and he feared what she would do when she made her appearance."

"Why should she have gotten worse all of a sudden?"

"I don't think it was all of a sudden. First came the death of his mother, about which he had terrible and quite conscious guilt feelings. His lifetime devotion to her stands as nothing in his mind beside the fact that he was not at her deathbed. This cut off his creative ability—evidently as a form of self-punishment he found himself unable to write after her death. Then his life was terribly empty of affection without her, until Kevin Boyle came to the college. In the role of George Hungerford he became fond of Boyle. In the role of Eloise, he fell madly in love with him."

"But as Eloise, how did he know about Kevin Boyle? Eloise never saw him, did she?"

"He had what is not uncommon in cases of dissociated personality—partial amnesia. As Hungerford he had no recollection of the existence of Eloise, but as Eloise, he had total recall of his life as George Hungerford. In fact, Eloise seems to regard herself as existing at the same time as George Hungerford, but under a sort of spell, so that she cannot act."

Bainbridge sighed. "The world would have seemed so much more *stable,*" he said wistfully, "if you had been drinking."

Forstmann stopped smiling and spoke soberly. "Hungerford used a phrase that impressed me very much. The poetry of unreason. He said he had been unable to come to a psychiatrist, even though he knew he was mentally ill, because he never found one who could grasp the poetry of unreason. Well, I could make a different diagnosis of why he didn't come, but what he said would remain true. Because psychiatrists aren't intended to be poets, they're scientists, they're obliged professionally to take the dew off the rose and analyze it as H_2O. That's their function. But when, on my busman's holidays, I've thought of madness, it seems most easily explained to me as poetry in action. A life of symbol rather than reality." He stopped suddenly and looked at Bainbridge. "For God's sake, Lucien, stop staring at me with your mouth hanging open as if you took my every word for gospel!"

Bainbridge shut his mouth and made a noise which sounded like "humph." "Well," he said more audibly, "and when did he—she—tell you about killing Boyle?"

"Almost immediately," said Forstmann. "We were talking about the notebook. First Hungerford was speaking as Hungerford. Suddenly that very distorting tic he had came over his face and he reappeared in the personality of Eloise. He had taken some sedative before my arrival. Not enough to put him to sleep, but enough to release the personality of Eloise, who must have been awfully close to the surface even before he took the drug, to judge from Leonard Marks' description of the state he was in earlier in the morning."

"What sort of person is Eloise?" asked Bainbridge curiously. "I mean, can you tell?"

"She's a pretty unattractive female," said Forstmann. "Brutal, ruthless, cunning, passionate—a real Mr. Hyde type."

"I still want to know about the murder," said Bainbridge.

"Well," said Forstmann, leaning forward and opening the zipper of his brief case, "read this." He pulled out a few lined sheets of paper, covered with great toppling calligraphy, and handed them to Bainbridge. "Begin here."

Bainbridge formed the words with his lips, trying to make out the strange writing, and then he began to read aloud:

Dear Dr. Forstmann, old kid old coffin-face old mortality, this is the letter of how I killed Kevin Boyle—my sweet my love but he would not have me no, he turned his face away. Listen, I said to him, I said Listen Kevin, I am your lovely, but he could not see me, he could not see me for the Other One that was without, that enemy, that tomb of ice in which I lay betrayed, our Hungerford. Listen, Kevin, I said, I am free, now no one can stop me (for this was the first time of my coming into the light) but he turned from me, and I could see that there was disgust and horror in his face and this I could not stand. So I took the poker up from the hearth and crushed his head in as he was going to the door. How did I do it? Simply like this. I took the poker and I hit him. And there he lay with his dear head mashed in like an eggshell, like an egg with the chick all unborn and oozing out the crevices. . . .

Bainbridge laid the papers down on the desk and whistled long and low.

"The poetry of unreason," said Forstmann softly.

"The poetry of unreason," echoed Bainbridge.

HONEY SACHEVERAL sat in the Harlow Taproom looking like an angel and drinking an Alexander. Petey Jones of Amherst, sitting opposite, heaved a sigh.

"Gee, Honey," he said. "If I sat on that side, I could hold your hand. If I sit on this side I can look at you. Gee, Honey, I don't know what to do."

Honey giggled. "Silly, you could hold my hand *across* the table. Can I have another Alexayunduh?"

Petey Jones sighed again and took the white hand (magenta tipped) which she extended in one of his own rather grubby paws. With the other he surreptitiously counted ready cash under the table.

"Know what?" said Honey, after Petey had summoned the waitress and ordered her drink, "Mr. Hungerford's gone crazy. They took him to the State Hospital."

"Gosh," said Petey reverently, "we used a book of his in a Sophomore English course. Crazy, huh?"

"Uh-huh," said Honey. "But then, intellectual people are more likely to go crazy than other people. It's because they *think* too much. I don't think it's a good idea for a person to think too much. Even for a man."

"Kinda wears your brain out, I guess," said Petey.

"That's right," said Honey. "My mama says a girl never should think too much. Just have a good time and leave the thinking to the men. My mama says a woman's place is in the home, and who in the world wants to just sit around home and *think?*"

Petey Jones leaned over the table ardently. "I like my women *feminine!*" he said.

"My mama always brought me up to be a feminine sort of girl," said Honey complacently. "Can I have another Alexayunduh?"

"Sure," said Petey nervously, feeling in his pocket to where there was a dollar and seven cents in change.

"But," said Honey contemplatively, "you can't honestly say an intellectual girl *never* gets a man. Now you take Kate Innes."

PETEY signalled the waitress for another Alexander and took a very small sip of his beer. "Innes!" he said. "Do I know her?"

"I don't guess so," said Honey. "She's the editor of *The Holly*. Now she's a right messy lookin' sort of a girl, and *real* smart, so's you'd never expect her to do anything —well, you know, *foolish*. But I'm blessed if she didn't up and elope with this cute little ole reporter we met right here in this very booth!"

"You mean right *here*?" asked Petey meaningfully. "Maybe it's an omen!"

"Omen?" questioned Honey.

"*You* know," explained Petey, "like there they were in this very booth and *they* eloped, and now here we are."

"Why, Petey!" said Honey appreciatively, "That's right romantic of you! Can I have another Alexayunduh?"

"Gee, Honey," said Petey nervously, "do you think you ought to? You've already had three and it's only nine o'clock."

"Oh Petey!" cried Honey reproachfully, "The Sacheverals always carry their liquor like gentlemen and ladies!"

"All right," sighed Petey. "Wait till the waitress comes around this way again."

"And speakin' of crazy people," said Honey, "they let that little Morrison girl come right back to Birnham House. Now I call that right silly. She might murder us all in our beds, for all we know."

"Oh," said Petey knowingly, "that's the one they had the piece about in the *Messenger*—about did she murder Kevin Boyle."

"Well," said Honey doubtfully, "they said she couldn't have because I saw her in Birnham on the day of the murder between five and six, but maybe she did it some other time, or something." Honey's smoky eyelashes were hanging low. "Oh, Petey!" she mumbled. "I'm *so* sleepy. That ole Alexayunduh better hurry up!" She rested her flower head on her rosy palm.

"Listen, Honey, don't go to sleep—don't you want some coffee or something?"

"Don't want—nothin'—but—a—little ole—Alexayunduh," murmured Honey, her Botticelli countenance flushed, her cheek pillowed on her hand.

"Wake up! Wake up!" cried Petey frantically. "Honey, you can't—" and then, as the waitress came down between the tables, he tried to look as if he were interested only in his few drops of beer. When she was out of sight again, he raised his honest whiskerless countenance to the ceiling and whispered to nobody in particular, "Gee, what are you supposed to do when your girl passes out?"

THE END

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

By Helen Greenwood

RUTH MOORE has written an engaging and entertaining novel of down-Easters in **Spoonhandle,** the story of a Maine community. Lovers of Maine will find really authentic detail here, for Miss Moore, herself a native of the state, is a master at creating atmosphere.

Ruth Moore

The book deals with the Stilwells of Spoon Island. Pete, the village storekeeper, and his sister Agnes were the hardheaded, money-grabbing pair of the tribe. Willie and Hod, their brothers, were independent and idealistic. The plot revolves around Pete's efforts to swindle his neighbors and sell the community out to the "summer people."

Spoonhandle suffers, it seems to me, from a plethora of plot. Each character has a problem which the author finally arranges and neatly packages for a grand finale which gives everyone, including the unpleasant Pete and Agnes, approximately what they want. And there are many characters—sharply defined, all of them, but perhaps a little too definitely "typed." The good are very, very good and the bad are horrid.

With some of the minor people, Miss Moore has been more skillful. The "state boy," Donny, is beautifully done, with all his fierce pride and silent longing for understanding, an understanding that Willie Stilwell eventually supplies.

The love story, a minor theme woven against the main plot, is the weakest element in the book. Despite his homely virtues, his integrity and handsomeness, Hod Stilwell seems too simple to capture permanently Ann Freeman, the girl who returned home to write a second novel and found herself caught up in the affairs of Spoon Island. A Thomas Beer might have been able to make this section of the book more convincing.

Spoonhandle is so good that one wishes it to be perfect.

William Morrow and Company, New York. Price $2.75.

HUMPHREY PAKINGTON is by profession an architect and by inheritance the next Earl of Hampden. The total charm of his latest book, **Aston Kings,** may lie in his dilettante approach to novel writing. *The novel* was obviously written for the author's own enjoyment.

Humphrey Pakington

Not since Trollope has anyone so enchantingly portrayed English country life. Pakington writes with deft and always kindly humor of thoroughly credible and nice people.

Aston Kings is the story of the Wargrave family, their friends and their relatives. Canon Wargrave, a charming and, in his own eyes, sternly autocratic man, is absolutely dominated by his wife, Lady Alice, a woman with a superb sense of humor and great common sense.

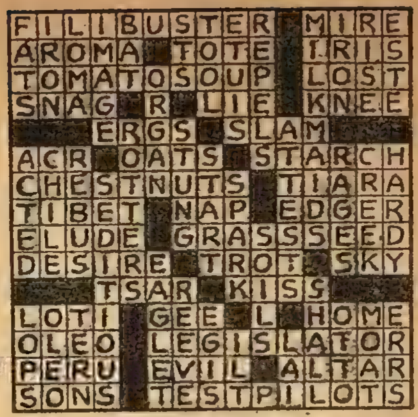
The tender love story of Kate Wargrave, one of the canon's children, and the diffident John Markham, is delightful. John's abortive efforts to approach the loquacious canon for his daughter's hand are nostalgically reminiscent of the best of the Victorians and make the reader welcome this return to a humor that is not based on the salacious and *double entendre.*

W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., New York. Price $2.75.

QUIZZ-ICAL CROSSWORD

By Ted Shane

9/1/46



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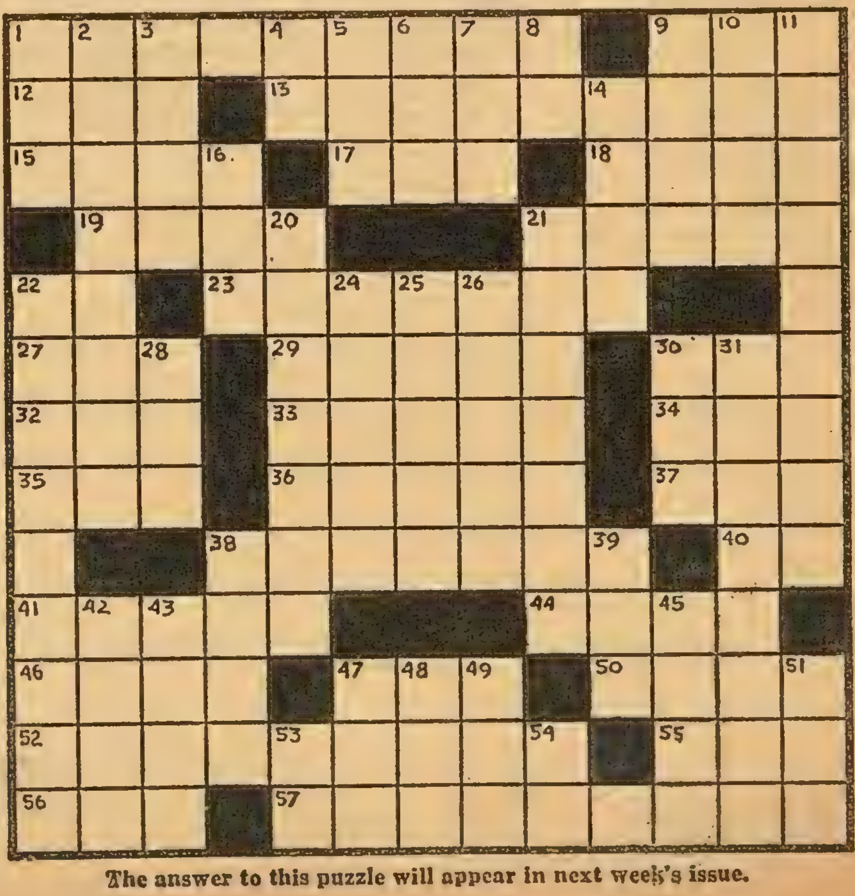
Last week's answer

HORIZONTAL

1 What arch-Tammany grafter was villain in the recent musical, Up in Central Park? (two words)
9 Sawbones (abbr. pl.)
12 A Jetherite (1 Chron. 7:38)
13 A Roman captain was called a what?
15 Admiral Horthy headed the nonexistent Hungarian what?
17 What keeps the British going?
18 The A. in A.D.
19 With what sand piles did golfers once play?
21 Name the outstanding thing about Longfellow's Village Blacksmith
22 Name the real big battle wagon of the U. S. Navy (nickname)
23 Xerxes lost a big sea battle off what island?
27 Kind of damp baby
29 What was movie star Novarro's first name?
30 Complete Bing Crosby's and Russia's chant: —— or Nothing at ——
32 Name the tough wing of American labor (abbr.)
33 Long-hair musical comedy is what?
34 Complete: —— *culpa!*
35 Cleveland's Boudreau's nickname
36 What would you use to change sugar into alcohol?
37 Tibetan truck motor
38 What kind of god worships an idol?
40 South African small livestock
41 Complete: Come unto me, all ye that . . . are heavy ——
44 Son of Shem
46 Name the symbol of St. Mark
47 Name *the* prewar Germany film studio
50 One-horse is a synonym of what?
52 Where has a prominent Fascist been democratically elected President?
55 Name Iran's delegate to the U.N.
56 What isolationist was recently defeated in an attempt to get back into the Senate?
57 A sufferer from a persecution complex has a what condition? (pl.)

VERTICAL

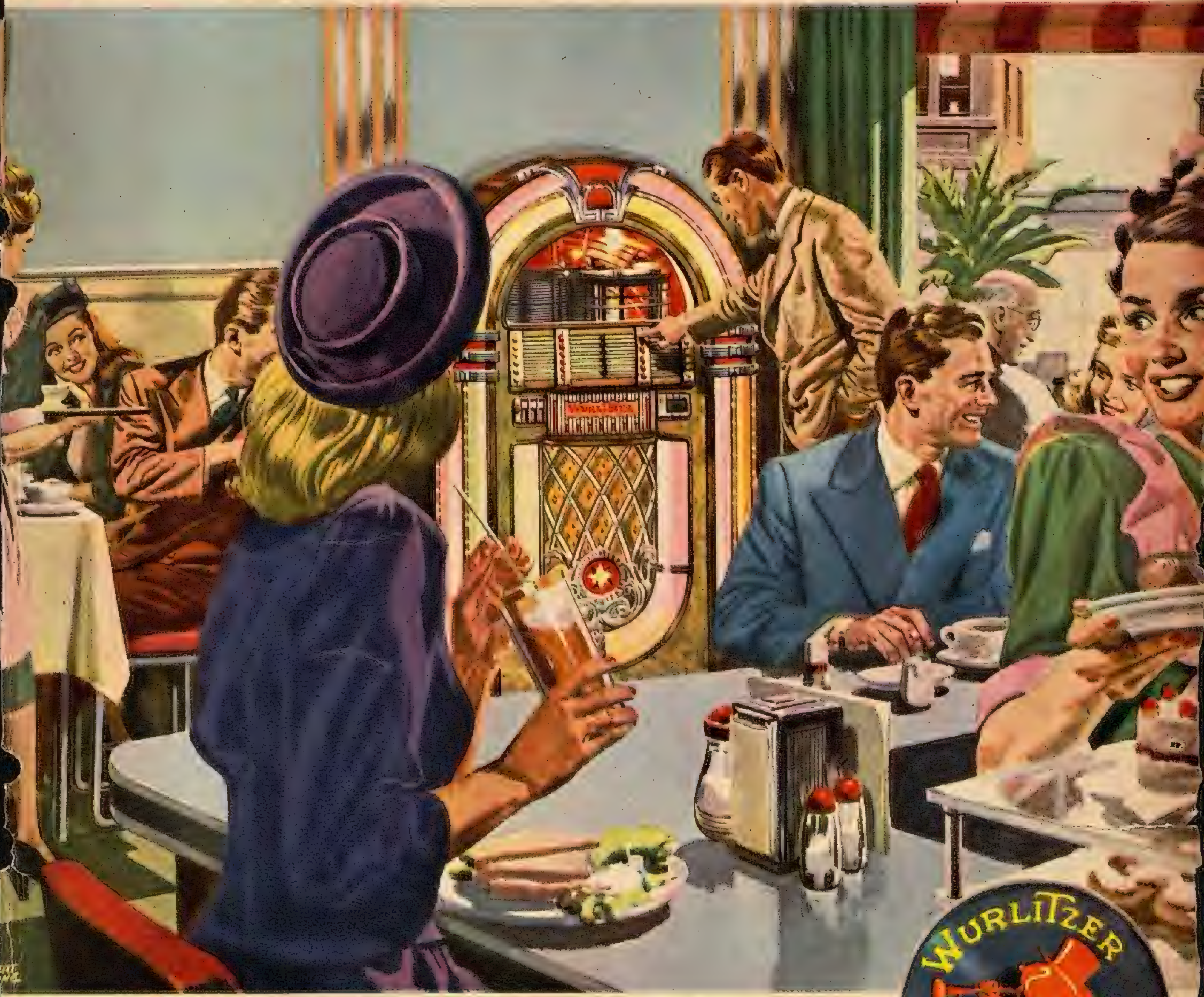
1 Curse by ecclesiastical authority
2 Bach's Passion of St. Matthew is what form of composition?
3 Complete: Take It Easy and —— a Life!
4 Loud pedal in piano playing is abbreviated how?
5 The name of Volstead was anathema to the what?
6 Compass point
7 Greek anagram for 17 Horizontal
8 Thou, krautishly
9 Name the most floury of states (abbr.)
10 Bushed, as in fatigued
11 What's a beautifully symmetrical, lacy, star-shaped, iced hexagonal figure of aqueous vapor?
14 Nile boat captain
16 Agreeable man
20 Name the author of The Human Comedy
21 What idol of the adolescent is against intolerance?
22 To what general did Lincoln write, "If you're not doing anything with your army, I'd like to borrow it"?
24 Boutonnière chassis
25 When you deprive yourself of two slices of bread, you invite a European to what? (two words)
26 Transliterate: — —. . . . .
28 Complete: —— made me what I am today
30 Which Miss Lowell smoked cigars?
31 What fertilizer can be homemade from your own trees? (two words)
38 M. Krupa's nickname
39 What abbr. do you find with inst. and rec'd?
42 Complete: Our brightest joys are but as —— shapes!
43 Venetian Duce
45 Turkestan sky-scraping mountain range
47 The eye, in Egyptian symbolism
48 What wood doesn't weather well in outside construction?
49 What word in writing prescriptions means "take of each"?
51 Complete the song parody: —— You Is or Is You —— My Baby?
53 Notary Public (abbr.)
54 One or any



The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

Only two waitresses

. . . yet 24 of America's top bands play here every day



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one of the miracles of Wurlitzer Phonograph Music. A galaxy of greatest bands in the land can play a parade of the nation's top nes for your entertainment...in a tiny sandwich shop!

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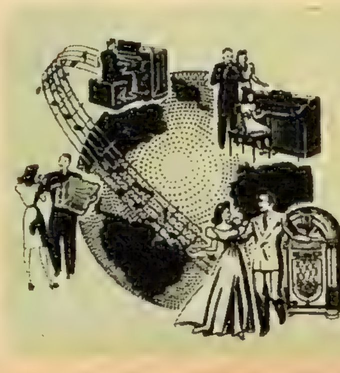
The *Sign of the Musical Note* identifies places where you can have fun playing a Wurlitzer.

WURLITZER
PHONOGRAPH
MUSIC



THE NAME THAT MEANS *Music* TO MILLIONS

The music of Wurlitzer pianos, accordions, electronic organs, and juke boxes is heard "'round the world." Wurlitzer is America's largest manufacturer of pianos all produced under one name... also America's largest, best known, manufacturer of juke boxes and accordions.

Prepare by Col dept,

Clothes Clinic
By P. B. Juster

Clothing

FALL COATS

ACTION is the key to modern living and the outer coats for this fall reflect that trend. Most styles call for full sweep, easy fit, casualness, with extra comfort through shoulders and chest, and moderate in length. There will be a variety of styles and fabrics. Here are four favorites:

Fabric: nub tweed. Style: raglan. Note full sweep of the shoulders and body for unusual comfort in driving your car. Sporty for both town and country wear.

Fabric: gabardine. Style: set-in sleeve, fly front. Perfect for the one-coat man, especially the traveler. Sheds rain, wears well. Casual, yet is fine for business.

NORTHWEST A
THWEST

Fabric: camel's hair. Style: fly-front box. For the man who wants the ultimate in luxurious appearance. Can be worn for 'most any occasion. Notice how collar stands away from the neck—a fault due to selecting a coat that is too small.

Fabric: cheviot. Style: double-breasted lounge. A dapper dress coat for business and evening. This style is designed for comfort with ample fullness through shoulders, chest, and waist. It is an inch or two shorter than casual coats.

THIS IS MY SON

Continued from Page 27

In Bert's room, Hub listened without interrupting.

"I'd like to see the kid," he said.

Bert stopped at a corner drugstore and bought balloons for Tim and the other children where Tim lived.

Tim was asleep. Mrs. Wooten took them into the room where he slept with four of her youngsters. He was half out of his covers, his round cheeks red and damp. Hub stooped over and looked at him intently. He straightened presently and followed Bert from the room.

"You go to see him every night?" Hub said.

"I've kind of made the habit," Bert said.

IT was a cloudy night, the air damp and murky. Bert took Hub to the small forgotten park, and they found a bench and sat talking.

"You going to bring Tim up?" Hub said.

"Yes."

Hub kicked the gravel on the path under his feet.

"She sure played you for a sucker," he said. "Gina."

"The thing was mutual," Bert said.

"That kid needn't be your son," Hub said. "He could be anybody's son." He moved his shoulders impatiently. "Gina was good to the Army," Hub said. He looked at Bert defiantly. "I played around with her," he said, "and so did a lot of other guys. What she figured was you'd come back looking for her. We all told her the same thing. We all said we'd come back. She counted on you."

"He looks like me," Bert said.

"A kid that age looks like anybody and nobody," Hub said earnestly. "He's all right where he is. He can grow up there, taking his chances with the other kids. The woman's good to him. You're a damn fool to claim him."

Up to now Bert hadn't questioned Tim's being his son.

"He looks like me," he repeated stubbornly. "Gina told the woman his father's name was Bert."

Hub shivered.

"I get cold, sitting here," he said. "My blood needs thickening."

Bert took step beside him, automatically shifting his feet to fall into step.

He saw that Hub was no good to him now. Hub could cancel his indebtedness, and count the money in his pocket, and buy himself a drink, and look ahead riotously to a gay tomorrow. Bert couldn't.

"What I can't understand is I'm not ashamed," he said. "Of Gina and me, I mean. It seemed right. If it wasn't right, why did it seem right? Maybe it's that I've seen things since to make me more ashamed—men killing men."

"Aw, shut up," Hub said. "No good thinking of that. That's behind us."

He called the next night, at dinnertime. He wanted a date with Sara.

"Look," Bert said awkwardly. "Sara and I, we're kind of stepping out together."

Hub laughed. He sounded relieved. "You scared me for awhile, with all that Gina talk," he said.

Bert hung up the receiver and asked himself why he shouldn't take Sara to a movie. She went out with other men sometimes, different ones. He wouldn't be trespassing.

She said she'd be glad to go out with him. But when they left the boardinghouse they found the fog thick as cloud around them.

"I'd rather walk," Sara said, lifting her face to the mist. "I grew up on the prairies. It still seems a kind of miracle, finding all this moisture around me without having prayed for rain."

Bert said he'd like to walk too.

"I grew up in Kansas," he said. "The folks still have the farm back there. I'll go back some day. Maybe."

She had tied a scarf around her hair, and it was knotted under her chin. It gave her face a sculptured purity. It disturbed Bert to meet the grave serenity of her glance.

"Have you ever been in love?" he said.

"Yes," she said. She walked along beside him, silent and thoughtful. "I came west because Jimmy wanted me to, before he went across," she said. "We saw each other often—that last week."

"Married?"

She shook her head.

"His parents wanted him to wait until afterward, until he came back," she said. "He promised."

"You wanted to get married?" Bert insisted, probing.

She looked up at him, her young face bleak.

"It was a long time ago," she said. "I can't remember much about it. Yes, I wanted to get married. We both wanted that."

"You'd ought to remember a thing like that," Bert said, "if you were in love with him." He wasn't criticizing her. He was examining his heart. "He still out there?" he said.

"He died at Buna," Sara told him.

SHE seemed willing enough to go out with him. Sometimes she had another date. Sometimes she didn't. After a while she didn't have other dates. She and Bert would walk up to the forgotten park and talk. Or they would turn toward town and window-shop. She asked him occasionally about the baby. He was evasive, answering.

"I don't know him very well," he said. "I see him now and then. The clothes fit him."

He saw Tim every day, sometimes in the morning, before work; sometimes in the evening, before dinner. Sara could have asked direct questions, but she never did.

In the park one night he kissed her. He held out his arms, scarcely

Send them back to school Whistling

PART of the fun of heading back to school is the buying of "supplies". Especially if they include a handsome, serviceable Wearever pen and pencil set. Wearever pens write at the very touch of pen to paper, thanks to such features as 14 Karat gold point, patented "C-Flow"* feed, and generous ink reservoir.

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BY AMERICA'S LARGEST FOUNTAIN PEN MANUFACTURER

WEAREVER*

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knowing what he did, and she turned into them naturally, happily, and lifted her lips for his kiss. He recalled Gina when he kissed Sara, but what had been feverish and blinding in his feeling for Gina was tender and awed by Sara's response.

He drew away from her at last, angry with himself and shaken.

"That stuff's no good," Bert said.

Sara laughed and touched his cheek with gentle fingers.

"I liked it," Sara said. It was the most disturbing thing about her, her simplicity.

He took her home, and he didn't kiss her again. He told himself a man in his position, lonely, bewildered, three years away from his feminine kind, would go overboard for the first girl he kissed. He narrowed his thoughts to greater honesty. He told himself any man, knowing Sara, would love her. He told himself at last that he did love her. But he had loved Gina too, hadn't he? And what had become of that love?

HE didn't sleep that night. He stopped in to see Tim on his way to work, and he ate dinner that night near the plant. He went to a movie alone and sat through a double feature, and part of the first feature again. Leaving the movie, he struck out on foot, looking for Hub. Hub had a single room in a dingy hotel. He was alone in his room, reading the Sporting News.

"Come in," he said. He was pleased. "Want a drink?"

Bert said it was pretty late for a drink. He had to work tomorrow. But he made himself comfortable, with a pillow behind his head on Hub's bed, and they talked for hours without knowing time had passed. Dawn through Hub's east-looking window recalled Bert. He stood up and reached for his leather jacket.

"You know where Gina is?" Bert said. "I want to find her."

"Look," Hub said. "You won't do any good that way."

"I want to find her," Bert repeated. "I've got to talk to her."

"I don't know where she is and I don't want to."

"You must know somebody who knows something about her."

Hub got up from the easy chair he was slouched in and went to the dresser and rubbed his stubbled face with an exploring hand.

"She's married, if that's what you want to know," he said. "I know that much. And she's moved. She's gone south."

"South?"

"South," Hub said angrily, "and I don't want to get mixed up in this business." He turned and looked at Bert. "She's living in San Mateo now," he said sullenly. "Married a man named Morgan. Pete Morgan. That's all I know."

"You don't see this thing the way I do," Bert said. "Thanks anyway. I'll be seeing you."

He had breakfast in an all-night café and lingered, reading the morning paper, until it was time to go to work. At the plant he saw his boss and got two days off, and took the bus to Mrs. Crampton's. Sara had left for the store. Bert dallied, bathing and changing his clothes, but he still had to wait for the suburban bus to take him to San Mateo. It was crowded and he had to stand.

The town was new to him, but he liked its tidy streets. By midafternoon he had a list of the apartment houses in town. He knew that much about Gina. She liked apartment-house living. He found a telephone booth and, his pocket full of nickels, he began calling the apartment houses. It took time. It was nine when he located her residence, but she wasn't at home. Bert took a room in the nearest hotel.

He lay awake, on his back, his hands clasped under his head, wondering how she'd look and what he'd say to her. He figured nine o'clock the next morning wouldn't be too early to call on her. It was ten o'clock when he woke.

He found he had no stomach for breakfast, and he left the café he had entered without ordering. The sun had burned holes through the fog and the day was gracious. Bert could smell the sea. He asked himself why he was here, what he thought he was doing? She had abandoned Tim over a year ago, hadn't she? No claim she made now would stand up in court. He had only to bundle Tim up and take him to the farm and she'd never stay with the job of trying to find the kid again. It was foolhardy to contact Gina. She wasn't a stable quantity. She could jump either way. Left alone, she probably wouldn't jump at all.

He stood a long while at the corner, looking toward Gina's apartment house. Maybe Hub was right. Maybe Bert couldn't do any good this way. No matter what came of an interview with Gina, he couldn't ask Sara to marry him. Sara, with the clear brown eyes and silky hair and gentle lips.

He told himself angrily to stop thinking about Sara. She had been lost to him before he'd met her. He strode down the sidewalk to the apartment house.

GINA was at home. She was heavier than he remembered, but still pink and white and unbelievably pretty. She was alone in the apartment, and she had been tidying it, a house coat pulled on over her nightdress, her pale hair with its natural wave heavy on her shoulders.

"Come in," she said, even before she recognized him. "Why, it's Bert!" turning him to catch the morning light on his face. "Bert, you got back safe." She made him feel she had been worrying about him. Her hand on his arm clung. Bert moved away from her touch and looked around him. The apartment was nicer than he had expected. If Gina's taste had furnished it, there was money to buy what she wanted. Bert began to feel better.

"I haven't got much time," he said.

"How've you been, Bert?" Gina said. "My, it's a long time." She laughed, and her laughter had always pleased him, childish and gay as a baby's musical rattle. "I don't even remember," Gina said.

Bert sat down.

"You remember Tim, don't you?" Bert said.

"Tim?"

"The baby," Bert said.

She looked at him with quick uneasiness.

"Now, look, Bert," she said. "I don't want any trouble. Pete's crazy about me, and I'm crazy about him, and all that other part, that's over and done with. I couldn't keep him here. You can see I couldn't keep a kid here. It's too small. And, anyway, Pete doesn't like kids. I put him in a good home. He's better off where he is." She was alarmed, close to terror.

"You never went back to see him," Bert began, but he stopped. They could go on for an hour, throwing words at each other. It wouldn't help Tim. Gina didn't want him. That was all he needed to know.

"He's my kid, then?" he said. "He's all mine?"

"Bert, I couldn't do a thing while I had him on my hands," she said. "I didn't want him. I didn't ask to have him."

Bert took her hands in one of his.

"It's all right, Gina," he said. "He wouldn't want to make trouble for you, any more than I would."

BERT felt spent and bewildered, going home on the bus. Gina was canceled out now, and that was what he had wanted. But he wanted something more than that. He wanted what Gina had—love and a home. He wanted Sara.

He wanted Sara as he had never wanted Gina. He wanted happiness for himself. Out there, in his three years away, seeing men die who deserved as much as he did to live, he had lost with gradual awareness the belief that it mattered very much whether any man were saved or taken. Sitting in the bus, fists doubled on his knees, he felt a resurgence of self-concern, and it overwhelmed him with its strength. Sara was at its core.

He reached Mrs. Crampton's before Sara came home from work. He went up to his room and shaved, because he hadn't bothered to shave that morning. He changed his shirt. When Sara came into the boardinghouse, Bert was in the hall, waiting for her. She looked up at him with quick welcome.

"You've been away," she said.

"I want to talk to you," Bert said. "There's time, before dinner."

"I missed you," she said, and went outside with him.

The days were growing shorter,

but the sky was still bright. In the west the fog was creeping up to meet the lowering sun. A golden radiance enveloped the shabby hill, and Bert and Sara. He told himself Hub and Gina were right. A man shouldn't have to pay for what he hadn't sought. The kid was happy where he was. Maybe he wasn't his son anyway. Without him, never looking back, a man could marry Sara and be happy. He reached for her there, in the middle of the sidewalk, and drew her to him and kissed her again. It was a long kiss.

He drew away abruptly.

He wished he had never met her. He wished he had never come home.

"Let's go down this way," he said roughly. He didn't touch her again. He drew away swiftly as her swinging hand brushed his. She wasn't for him. She never had been, but he wanted her to know why she wasn't for him. He wanted her to meet Tim. He wanted to know if pity or horror would color her clear eyes when he told her.

TIM was in the small park. At Bert's voice he turned and wobbled happily toward him. Bert picked him up.

The boy was warm to his arms, warm and wriggling, and dearer than he'd known.

"This is Tim," Bert said. "This is my son."

Sara looked up at him, and there was nothing at all in her eyes, nothing to read. They were clear as they had been, unshocked, unpitying.

"I know," she said. "I used to walk this way often, before you and I—" she stopped, but she went on again presently, quietly, "before you and I knew each other. He looks like you," she said.

"I want you to understand," Bert began, but Sara was still speaking.

"He could have been my son," she said gently. "He could have been mine and Jimmy's." She turned away from him, to the rail at the edge of the pond. "There must be a great many of us," she said, "only half knowing what happened. I can remember the terrible urgency, and how afraid I was for Jimmy, and how Jimmy was afraid for himself. We were lonely, too."

Tim squirmed in Bert's arms. He made it known he was hungry. Bert put him down and Tim wobbled away toward home and dinner.

"Are you going to adopt him?" Sara said.

Bert nodded. He hadn't thought of it before, but he saw now it was a good solution. He would have an answer for Tim then, when the boy grew old enough to ask questions.

"There have to be two parents in a home, for adoption," Sara said. She stood near his elbow, still looking up at him. For the first time he saw in Sara's eyes the self-distrust which had lain so long in his heart.

He reached out swiftly for her with safeguarding arms.

THE END

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L5861-20

VETERANS' Bulletin Board

BY MATT URBAN

"WHY don't veterans stop trying to be veterans and start acting like ordinary citizens?" That's a commonly aired question.

One answer is that the public doesn't let the veteran act like an "ordinary citizen."

Take, for example, the many crimes that are committed throughout the country. If the criminal is an ex-serviceman, this is immediately played up. In time people can't help but feel that the returning serviceman has nothing but blood in his eye. As one veteran said to me, "I've yet to read '4-F Slays Wife' or '2-B Held for Rape.' "

It does not occur to many people that even before the war most criminals were in the age group of from 18 to 35. With that fact in mind, it is hardly surprising that many of today's criminals served in the armed forces.

Correspondence Courses

If our fellow citizens want the veteran to act as though he had never been away—like a civilian—then they ought to treat him as such. Instead of attributing nervousness, arrogance, or lack of confidence to the fact that a man's a veteran, why not attribute them to other things, as one would in the cases of men who have never served?

There are undeserving veterans, of course. The bad ones are the characters who forever are feeling sorry for themselves, or the ones who are trying to make themselves think that they have just gone through "a living hell" and therefore the world owes them a living. That group, however, is definitely a minority. The general public must be made aware of this fact. No one can do this better than the veterans themselves—by words and deeds.

* * *

Pvt. Robert E. Dalton, Houston, Tex. That's correct, Bob. Being on active duty and not engaging in basic training, you do qualify for correspondence courses under U. S. Armed Forces Institute. But here's what you have to do to start the courses. First of all, you will have to secure the permission of your Commanding Officer. It also would be wise to consult with your Information and Education officer. Inquire; there is bound to be one around. A two-dollar registration fee is the only cost, no matter how many courses you may select.

* * *

Ralph Johnson, Greensburg, N. Y. It's most commendable of you to try to add to the fine service record you have just put in by offering your dog for training as a K-9. The War Department is still accepting dogs as replacements for the ones being discharged. Contact Raymond C. Smith, Box 331, Demarest, N. J. You will be told how the Army is willing to pay up to $150 for each purebred German shepherd male between the ages of 1 and 3½ years, and in weight between 70 and 90 pounds. Here's luck to you in qualifying your dog for the K-9s!

* * *

William T. Woller, New York, N. Y. If you think the Veterans Administration's notification that your pension is to be reduced in sixty days is a rotten deal, then I advise you to submit to the VA additional evidence to show that the reduction is not warranted. Medical reports and statements by reliable witnesses are always closely looked over in the reviewing of cases such as yours.

* * *

Mrs. S. H., Hartford, Conn. The fact that you are the beneficiary of your son's National Service Life Insurance doesn't necessarily mean you would be notified if ever your boy should allow the policy to lapse.

VETERANS: The Bulletin Board is your department, the watchdog of your interests—written and edited by a combat veteran of World War II. Make the most of it! Write in your gripes and your ideas. No names will be used without permission. Address Veterans' Bulletin Board, c/o Liberty, 37 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

FARMS—$295 AND UP

Continued from Page 30

young Strout, who at that time knew no more about real estate than he did about splitting atoms. "There's a buyer for every farm—if you use the right technique." He ignored the fact that those farms had been on the market for five years. But by going out and digging up customers he sold all four of them in two months, though he took a personal loss of $100 for expenses. That loss didn't matter, however—he had demonstrated his fundamental point, and he's been demonstrating it ever since.

The secret of his phenomenal ability to sell farms in good times and bad, year in and year out, at prices ranging from $295.50 "for this choice one-man farm with two apple trees, and owner will toss in milk goat—if you hurry!" to the rambling West Coast ranch, "bargain at $100,000 with ten riding horses included—if you hurry!" is a realistic understanding of people's wants and a subtle exploitation of the American dream of all men, the dream of settling down in that "little place in the country."

ANOTHER important factor is that the men who work in the 400 branch offices of Strout Realty are natives of the section in which they operate. Thus they are familiar with farm values in it and, as Strout says, are not prone to overpricing.

Coupled with these factors is the policy of Strout associates to get the selling farmer to include as much equipment and livestock as possible, to make the sale more attractive.

All of which explains the success of Strout's methods which have resulted in the sale of one farm in fourteen minutes flat, others by mail and over the telephone, and why Strout associates frequently have buyers arrive simultaneously in answer to the same advertisement, to buy the same farm, and quarrel savagely. Since 1900 he has sold more than 83,000 farms for a total of more than $275,000,000. The amount of land involved is more than 7,500,000 acres. For the past three decades he has consistently averaged 2,000 farm sales a year, and last year Strout Realty was broker for 4,107 farm transactions, some $22,000,000 worth of business.

Heart of Strout's selling organization is his Money Making Farms catalogue, which he launched in 1903. It is responsible for sending more than a half million people farm-crazy each year. He publishes 450,000 copies of it yearly, making him the Sears, Roebuck of real estate. An evening spent flipping through its pages will send the most confirmed city dweller running to the nearest Strout office to see about buying "your own Utopia, a low cost security farm of 50 acres; $2,500 (terms arranged) with cow, four pigs and mower thrown in—if you hurry!" Sandwiched in between farm listings the prospective buyer's eye is exposed to this sort of hypnotic copy: "The farmer is his own master. No factory whistle summons him to work. He labors for profits, not wages. The soundest investment in this struggling world is land—farm land."

The catalogue is designed to lure buyers to a Strout office. So the only listings from the thousands in the Strout files to get into the catalogue are the real bargains. Each has been checked on 150 points by the submitting associate and Strout insists on an honest description. If a house has the reputation of being haunted, that fact must be duly noted. Somewhere, sometime, a buyer will turn up who actually wants a place complete with ghosts!

THE Strout catalogue finds it way all around the world. One Englishman saw a likely looking listing, asked that a pound of dirt be airmailed to him for examination. He forwarded a check for deposit and arrived a month later, routed the Strout associate out of bed at 3 A.M. and demanded to see the farm "as dawn arrives."

For prospective buyers who fail to find anything suitable in the catalogue, Strout supplies a detailed Special Service Form for the future farmer to fill out, specifying his needs and wants. From this form Strout's office attempts to find a made-to-order farm through a weekly mimeographed sales letter that goes to all Strout associates. When an agent thinks he has the farm to meet the specifications, the interested party is queried. The percentage of sales which result from this mail-order tailored-farm approach is very high.

One man emphasized in his specifications that he would pay up to $50,000 for the farm he wanted, provided it had a lake or brook on it for trout fishing. The enterprising Pennsylvania associate forthwith stocked one farm he had just listed, and wired the prospect details of the place "which includes brook with 2,500 trout and owner will throw in four poles, three reels, and special handmade trout flies—if you hurry!"

LS823-50

H. Litchman

"So do you!"

LIBERTY

Sometime ago a woman specified among her requirements that the farm she purchased must have lots of fresh air. A Connecticut associate took her out to a place and let her sniff an autumn breeze. "Are you sure this is fresh air?" she asked while inhaling.

"Ma'am," said the associate, straight-faced, "until you breathed that air it had never been in another person's lung."

The eighteen-page sales letter to associates which tells people's wants is authored by Miehls from the New York office. It is also a sort of trade paper for the branch offices, containing sales tips, etc. In addition, Miehls always injects a pep talk, speaking as coach to the team. The letter also lists the newest crop of prospective buyers to tell their wants to Strout Realty. Here's a typical one:

Charles F. Doe—4/10/46
RFD #3
Homeville, Pa.
Prefers a general farm, 200 acres of tillable land; in Pennsylvania; must be fully equipped; plenty of pasture land with running water; some wooded area; good roads; house of 10 rooms; wife would like brick oven; be near Reformed Church; school bus near by; priced under $10,000; will pay half down.

IF a Strout associate in Pennsylvania has the farm to meet those specifications, he contacts Charles F. Doe. If a New Jersey, or even a California, associate has the farm described, he also works on the prospect despite the stated intention of Mr. Doe to stay in Pennsylvania, for the number of people who will change locations to get what they want is surprisingly high.

First step in routing a farm through the Strout agency is to get the owner's permission to list it for sale. Associates submit listings of each new farm they have for sale with the New York office, where they are indexed and placed in a master file. The best bargains are used in the catalogue and given a supplemental send-off in an all-out classified-advertising campaign in newspapers. Strout foots an annual $100,000 bill for "For Sale" ads across the country. This figure makes him one of the top classified accounts anywhere.

The local associate is allowed to work on replies for two weeks. If he fails to interest prospects in that time, the home office follows up with the catalogue. If the interested prospect still is not biting, there is the Special Service Form for him to fill out, and then his needs and wants are circulated in the weekly con-

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fidential sales letter to all associates.

All Strout associates, identified by the organization's four-leaf-clover button, are hand-picked, experienced, bonded salesmen. Except in very rare instances, and in those only since last spring, the company does not ask exclusive listing of property for sale. They count more on the ability of Strout associates to whittle the asking price down and on getting prospective buyers interested before the other fellow.

Strout associates work on a straight commission basis. The company believes that this fosters independence and ingenuity, as the agent is strictly his own boss. However, each associate must turn in a goodly quota of annual sales if he expects to hold the territory for Strout. When an associate is making only eight or ten sales a year, Strout eases him out and gets another man in. The average Strout associate makes $4,000 a year.

A number of associates have been with the organization more than a quarter century; several over thirty years. Crack salesmen like E. C. Brumback of Middletown, Virginia, who gives his full time to selling farm real estate, make upward of $17,000 a year. Renew Young, the Hartford, Michigan, associate, speaks for all the agents when she says, "Brother, we have the best commodity in the world for sale—good American earth!"

STROUT'S commission on sales is a flat $200 plus 6 per cent of the selling price above $1,000. Thus a farm selling for $9,000 gives a brokerage of $680, which is split between company and associate. The independent real estate operators today are getting as high as 10 per cent and in some sections 12 or 15 per cent. But the Strout associate, working on sales volume with an organization, has more farms to sell and more prospects than the independent, and thus earns more money. Strout doesn't care what other business his associates may follow in addition to real estate, but all real-estate sales made must be made in the name of Strout. An associate cannot do any real-estate transacting on the side or on his own.

Today's farm sales have been averaging 50-per-cent cash on the barrelhead. Another 35 per cent are putting half down, carrying the remainder in a short-term mortgage. The remaining group, the little fellows, are buying with whatever they can scrape together for a down payment and carrying the balance on a long term basis. Unlike straight real-estate values today, which are highly inflated, the farm which formerly sold for $5,000 still goes for that price, generally speaking.

Strout has long emphasized resourcefulness in talking to his associates. To the Strout associate in New Jersey recently came two strangers from New York City, both eager to buy the same farm. Their arrival on the same train gave neither a purchase priority and they fought bitterly over who would buy it. They were a young man and a young woman. "Look," said the associate. "If you are both so wild about the place, why don't you get married and share it?" They eventually did. Matrimony has played a leading role in many sales. There are a number of prospects who write to Strout and ask for a farm "complete with widow or divorcee."

Good farms, properly priced, can usually be sold in two or three months at the most. But a minority of farms, badly priced, may kick around for years before getting a buyer. Strout knows that customers are always willing to buy if the price is right. The company keeps a prospect on the books for four years. In that time, if he has not purchased after looking at several really good bargains, he's checked off.

THE average farm sells for $4,000. The same farm, equipped, brings an average price of $5,500 to $6,000. The farms selling for these prices are usually taken by earnest hardworking people who want to make a living from the soil. The man who buys a farm at $4,000 or $5,000 can make a living for himself and his family, bring his living up to acceptable standards, and establish for himself a farm career; but often it means a seven-day work week.

A few years ago the "city farmer" was the laughingstock of agricultural America. But today the city slicker is no longer a joke when he takes to the plow. As a matter of fact, more than 50 per cent of farms being sold today by Strout are to city people.

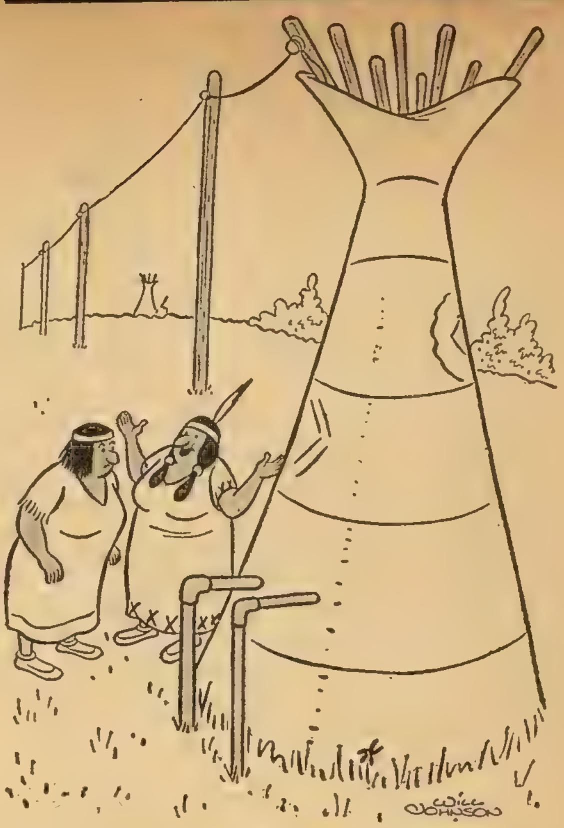
Today Strout runs the Los Angeles office of his firm, leaving the New York headquarters in the hands of Miehls. Between them they supervise the multimillion-dollar business of selling more farms than any other organization in the world. At the Los Angeles office with him, Strout has his son, E. A. Strout, Jr., who is assistant to the president; his daughter, Shirley Strout, director of information, and a nephew, E. M. Strout, art director.

Miehls, who joined the company twenty-five years ago, rose from salesman to vice-president and general manager. His wife, whom he met within the organization, is secretary of the company. The two practice what they preach, live on a farm in Orange County, New York.

In tomorrow's world of real-estate selling Miehls sees prospects being taken to the site by air; but he adds, "I pity the man who buys without getting the plane down on the farm so he can see what it looks like from the ground, too."

So far, it hasn't popped up in a Strout advertisement, but any day now you can look for one to read, "Charming family farm and owner will throw in two pair of nylons and Piper Cub—if you hurry!"

THE END



"I wouldn't have a place without gas, water, and electricity."

LIBERTY

SHOWDOWN IN PRO FOOTBALL

Continued from Page 19

1942 when Don Ameche, one of Ward's warmest friends, asked for a franchise in the National League for Los Angeles. Ameche mailed his application to Ward and he forwarded it to the N.F.L.

Ward relates that three owners blocked the bid—George Halas, of the Chicago Bears, Charley Bidwill of the Chicago Cardinals, and Dan Reeves of the Cleveland Rams, who even then had his eyes on Los Angeles. A unanimous vote was needed, but Ward's power was not enough to turn the trio, although he tried to convert each one individually. So a chastened Ward had to tell his good friend Ameche that he had failed—and last winter Reeves moved the Rams to Los Angeles.

Although Arch denies this, intimates say that his inability to get Ameche into the N.F.L. wounded his pride, and that in retaliation he conceived the All-America Football Conference. In any event, the incident certainly sharpened Ward's wits and he quickly saw that with Ameche and several other men whose franchise applications had been tabled by the N.F.L. he probably could start a new league successfully.

So in June, 1944, at St. Louis, Ward met with Ray Ryan, Evansville, Indiana, oil man; John Keeshin, then a Chicago trucking magnate; A. J. (Tony) Morabito, San Francisco lumber king; Sam Cordovano of Buffalo, representing millionaire oil man James Breuil; and Christy Walsh, representing Ameche of Los Angeles. Ward held the proxy of Arthur McBride, Cleveland taxicab magnate.

At that meeting the new league was born. Ward enjoyed outstanding success in organizing the All-America and his timing apparently was perfect. As a result of his untiring efforts, the league now is ready to field eight teams this fall in an effort to cash in on the evident postwar sports boom. But in trumpeting the All-America's assured success, the new conference's boosters, and possibly Ward too, forget that the owners already have poured close to $3,000,000 into the organization without getting back a single dollar yet.

True, their money has bought a great deal. The All-America's physical assets, including players, are undeniably impressive. Their cleated-foot brigade includes such big-name players as Norman Standlee, former Stanford All-American who became one of football's great fullbacks with the Chicago Bears of the N.F.L.; southpaw Frankie Albert, Stanford's brilliant 1940 quarterback when he was Standlee's teammate; Otto Graham, ex-Northwestern star; Bob Steuber, Missouri runaway halfback and later the Chicago Bears' property; and Eddie Prokop of Georgia, all with Cleveland; Bill Daley, Minnesota-Michigan All-American, Brooklyn; and Frankie Sinkwich, one-time Georgia All-American who later became the N.F.L.'s most valuable player with the Detroit Lions, now with New York.

THEIR gridiron brain trust lists an impressive membership of coaches: Ray Flaherty, New York; Mal Stevens, Brooklyn; Jack Meagher, Miami; Paul Brown, Cleveland; Dick Hanley, Chicago; Buck Shaw, San Francisco; Red Dawson, Buffalo; and Dudley DeGroot, Los Angeles. Flaherty and DeGroot, both former Washington Redskins coaches in the National League, are the only two with pro experience. The others are well-known collegiate mentors, possibly excepting Dawson, former assistant coach at Minnesota under Bernie Bierman. Dawson came to Buffalo during the summer, when Cordovano, who organized the entire Buffalo set-up, withdrew under mysterious circumstances.

The A.-A. playing sites are good, although some of the ovals are not considered ideal from the spectators' point of view. The All-America's real pigskin paradise, and the one gain that assured its debut this fall, is Yankee Stadium. "The House that Ruth Built" fell to the All-America when Dan Topping, part owner of the baseball Yankees, jumped the National League, where he held the Brooklyn franchise. Other stadiums include Ebbets Field, Brooklyn; the Orange Bowl, Miami; municipal stadiums in Buffalo and Cleveland; Kezar Stadium, San Francisco; Soldier Field, Chicago; and the use of the Coliseum in Los Angeles.

Pro football's entrance into the Coliseum was a major victory in itself. Pacific Coast college interests, which had kept the Coliseum's gates

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barred to the pro game for years, finally relented to the pressure of public opinion, the newspapers, and the arrival of big-league pro teams. The Los Angeles Rams of the N.F.L. snared six dates and thought they had squeezed out the All-America. But the A.-A.'s Los Angeles Dons, backed by powerful movie millionaires, gave the new conference a strong Far Western pivot by also gaining six dates.

In pure Dun & Bradstreet language, the A.-A. has more of the folding stuff than the N.F.L. In addition to the holdovers from the original group who met or were represented in St. Louis, McBride of Cleveland, Keeshin of Chicago, Morabito of San Francisco, Breuil of Buffalo, and Ameche of Los Angeles, the other owners are Bill Cox at Brooklyn, Harvey Hester at Miami, and Topping, ensconced in Yankee Stadium.

NEITHER Cox nor Hester can approach the bankrolls of their associates, and their franchises—in addition to Buffalo—are the least attractive from the strictly money-making aspect. But in all, the All-America is an organizational success. It is no secret that the A.-A. owners have stunned and surprised the N.F.L. with their player raids and rapid growth. But the league's future depends upon how much the All-America millionaires want to lose before they start breaking even and how much the N.F.L. can spend in bucking them.

Despite his apparent timing genius in getting the league ready to catch the postwar attendance surge, Ward's promotional reputation now faces the real test of whether he misjudged the opposition and the expense. Cold figures say he did—that pro football is not yet big enough to support two rival leagues.

During the past five seasons, when the National League annually set new attendance records, not once did every club make money. Even last season, when the Cleveland (now Los Angeles) Rams won the championship, they lost $40,000. During that five-year span, 85 per cent of each club's annual outlay went for player salaries. And as a result of the current bidding war with the All-America, the National League's player pay has skyrocketed 200 per cent in some cases. And the All-America clubs supposedly are paying even higher salaries to their star gridders.

Even a multimillionaire, however, hates to lose money by hurling it down a bottomless well. And unless the A.-A. becomes a money-making concern within three years, the organization may split wide open. But can the National League, which admittedly does not have multimillionaires sitting at its conference table, battle the challengers that long?

Arch Ward, who knows the owners intimately, says, "No. The two groups will unite under a double major-league set-up within about two years."

In the other camp, the National League owners say, "No. The All-America will crack before we ever give it a helping hand by agreeing to an affiliation. It must prove itself first. We have no intention of boarding a sinking ship."

By way of explaining his confident prediction, Ward adds, "The National League has played right into our hands in this fight. If we could have controlled their moves, our strategy could not have been better than their action."

Ward's statement strikes home in several instances. First, when the All-America asked for an audience, Layden told its representatives to "get a football first," giving the unknown conference the basis for a successful publicity campaign. Then came the truly staggering blow when Topping bolted his Brooklyn franchise, giving the A.-A. the use of Yankee Stadium. He bolted for $100,000, the bonus paid him by the All-America owners. The N.F.L. owners blamed Layden for letting slick-haired dapper Dan slip away.

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That, according to the N.F.L. owners, was the second strike against Layden, and they promptly hurled the third one. When his contract came up for renewal last January, they dumped the most prominent man in the business—the one figure who had climbed to the top in both collegiate and professional football. When Layden left, the league lost a lot of subway alumni, the people who follow the colors of the Fighting Irish wherever they fly.

Now the National League has Bert Bell as commissioner, a man little known outside of pro football and his home town of Philadelphia.

For the first three months of this year it looked as if the National League were licked. The owners had split wide open in the ouster of Layden and the election of Bell, and it appeared likely that the All-America would score quickly through the breach. The January meeting was a stormy one until Mara's vote hoisted Bell into the commissioner's chair.

BELL, member of an old-line Philadelphia family, had never been a football figure of prominence outside of his home town. Captain and quarterback of Penn's 1919 football team, Bell ultimately followed the yard markers into the pro end of the game. He took over the National League's Philadelphia franchise in 1933 and held it through 1940, serving also as coach the last three seasons. Alexis Thompson of New York then purchased the Philly club and Bell moved to Pittsburgh as part owner with Art Rooney of the Steelers. There he stayed until last January, when he signed a three-year contract, calling for a $20,000 annual salary, as N.F.L. commissioner.

The N.F.L. owners returned to New York three months after their stormy January session and enjoyed a highly successful spring meeting at which they swore a fight to the finish against the All-America and rallied to the support of Bell in answer to his critics.

The All-America now finds a rocky road ahead as the result of the reunited National League's stand. It is no secret that the A.-A. owners wanted an affiliation before their 1946 coming-out season. Crowley even went so far as to ask Bell, privately, to push the agreement plan at the N.F.L.'s April meeting. But the strategy died in the incubator and was never officially broached at the meeting as a result of the N.F.L. owners' adamant attitude towards the All-America.

Ward's plan obviously was to stampede the National League into an affiliation. But he misjudged the mettle of the N.F.L., which draws its strength from such pioneers of the pro grid sport as George Halas of the Chicago Bears, Curly Lambeau of the Green Bay Packers, George Marshall of the Washington Indians, and Mara of the New York Giants—men who once fought with their fists and sometimes their last dollars to build the game.

The N.F.L. began to fight back in midsummer, when radioman Ted Collins, owner of the Boston Yanks, took the clip off his bankroll and lured Angelo Bertelli, whip-armed quarterback of Notre Dame's 1943 team, away from the Los Angeles Dons, and Paul Governali, Columbia's All-America passer, away from Buffalo, for approximately $10,000-a-year salaries. His raids, the first by an N.F.L. owner, took the fight into the courtroom because the Dons quickly filed suit in federal court, seeking a permanent injunction to restrain Bertelli from playing with the Yanks for the duration of his two-year A.-A. contract.

The Dons' legal plunge threatened the very structure of the game—the legality of sports contracts. But Bertelli took a lot of zip out of the Dons' offensive when he announced that regardless of the outcome of the suit he would stick with the Yanks, even if he had to ride the bench for two years.

WITH the coming of fall, the bitterness between the two leagues mounted while hopes for an affiliation plummeted. The N.F.L. owners swore there would be no union. But there is one way the All-America can bring the proud National League to its knees.

That is by turning in major-league performances on the field and at the box office.

If A.-A. teams in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles cut into the N.F.L. teams' attendance—not just during the first half of the campaign but season long—it is almost certain that some National Leaguers will be ready to reconsider in December. But even a professional soothsayer would duck the job of predicting whether N.F.L. owners would vote for a 1947 affiliation. Pro football is a collection of some of the most unpredictable personalities in sports, and the N.F.L. has a corner on the market.

So, considering the A.-A.'s weak franchises in Miami, Buffalo, and Brooklyn, which Topping once said was not a pro football town, look for the A.-A. to wind up with four sound teams and merge with the N.F.L. within three years, at the latter's request! From the union will develop two leagues under one banner. Stubbornness and an old hurt block an early, less expensive merger.

And the one who will decide the eventual date is the fan—the big man with the average two-dollar admission price in his pocket.

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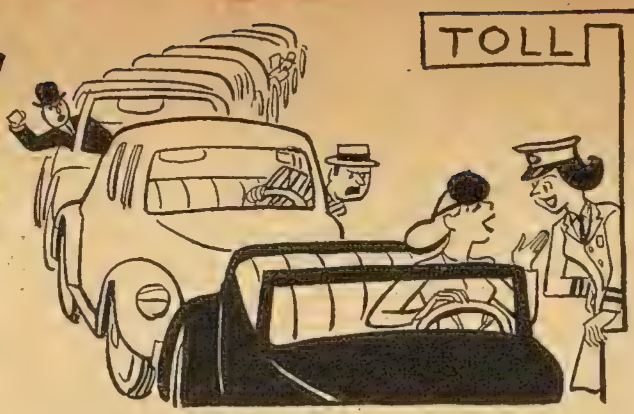
Woman-Talk



BY
MARGARET FISHBACK

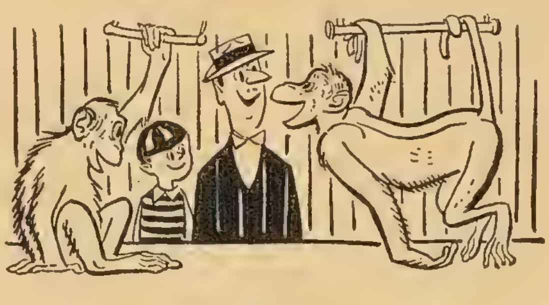
DOGGY: Thyra Winslow, whom I encountered at the Howard Greer show, told me she was about to fly to Europe on several magazine assignments. When I asked where she planned to park her Pom, that fierce four-pound pet pup known as Mister I. J. Fox, she assured me he was well provided for—he would summer with the Will Glickmans on Long Island, where he would be very happy because "they have lots of money and he likes their cooking." . . . While on the subject of doggy dogs, it seems suitable to brood on Mrs. Cornelia P. Meserole's will. She left $10,000 to care for the graves of three dogs in the Hartsdale Canine Cemetery, White Plains, New York. They are to have "coverlets of small green trees in winter, pansies in the spring, and small flowers in the summer." I am happy to note that the dogs did not get all of the estate.

THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS—Two Christmas-party fashion shows were staged smack in the middle of the hottest weather to prove there is a Santa Claus. The Wadsworth Watch Case Company gave a convivial one for the press at the Waldorf-Astoria to introduce its new fall line of powder cases. A Christmas tree decked with shining compacts, and a long table displayed the new models. Outstanding were the ones reflecting strong Chinese influence. Enameled dots in Ming colors decorated a huge case, and there were beautiful fan-shaped gold-plated cases with etched designs copied from an old Chinese fan. There were amusing compacts too, which waggish gentlemen will enjoy giving their ladyloves—one sported Adam and Eve complete with serpent and apples. Lady Godiva adorned another! A special group for teen-agers would appeal to *any* age—they featured such motifs as a phone-number design, a lipstick pattern, and lambs being pursued by a wolf. Prices range from two dollars to around ten, plus tax. The other Christmas shindig was given at a breakfast for the press to preview the coming La Cross manicure sets for men and women. In fine leather cases generously filled with nail preparations and handsomely made implements, they will make distinguished gifts, what with the return of stainless steel and the appearance of rich fourteen-carat gold plating. Magnificent spruce, hemlock, holly, and cornucopia decorations by Jack Kelly provided an appropriate background.

KID STUFF

When Little Tarzan watches Dad
Enjoy the monkeys at the zoo,
It's clear the perspicacious lad
Thinks Father's pretty funny too.

RELIEF IN HOT WEATHER!—During a sticky humid week in New York, crowded with fashion shows, the collection by Howard Greer of Hollywood, shown at the Plaza, proved as refreshing as a spring breeze. Known for his custom-made clothes for movie stars, Mr. Greer has produced some forty distinguished gowns which, while sophisticated and dramatic, have no suggestion of Hollywood tinsel about them. A genial down-to-earth man of business, designer Greer saw to it that there was nothing fey about his program either—it simply numbered the outfits and described them briefly. For example, "B8" was listed as a "black sheer wool, tunic, cartridge-pleated shoulders," instead of being given some whimsical name that would be no help to the reporter trying to recall which was which. In the collection were street dresses, dressmaker ensembles, afternoon and cocktail dresses, and evening gowns. Many of them featured wide, square, low necklines accented with lace or net. Skirts, especially in the afternoon and evening gowns, were very full, with generous amounts of nets and laces. Figure-enhancing draperies and tiered folds testified to Mr. Greer's conviction that the ideal female form is one with bosom, waist, and hips, to be "honestly revealed rather than camouflaged."



MISS BILLINGS MAKES A SALE

Continued from Page 29

Did you get it? said Barbara and Miss Billings produced the letter. She handed it over rather reluctantly for she hadn't had a chance to read it herself.

Anyway she gave the letter to Barbara who ran into the house with it. In ten minutes the girl came back. After a little stalling around the story came out.

Barbara had met Jack Eustis at a USO dance in Putnam when he was a lieutenant in the Army. It had been love at first sight and they had burned up the mails for the next two months and then Jack had two weeks' leave which he spent in Silchester. They had wanted to be married at once but Mr. Allen had put his foot down. He didn't like Jack. Also he felt that Jack without position or property was not desirable as a son-in-law. Father makes a class issue of it Barbara said and I don't think that's fair do you? It's understandable said Miss Billings.

Barbara went on to say that after six months abroad Jack had been divorced from the Army and had got a job with a real-estate firm in Putnam. But Putnam was fifty miles away. And father won't let him come to the house Barbara said. Father's organized a regular spy system—even our old Martha listens in on the extension when Jack calls. And now even my private correspondence isn't sacred.

Miss Billings said solemnly That is really inexcusable! I knew you'd understand! Barbara exclaimed. Jack and I love each other! Only—there's no one I can talk to.

AND presently Barbara blurted it out. The letter was to tell her that the arrangements were completed. Jack would meet her at eight the next night and they would drive over to Putnam and be married. I'm going to Jack now—said Barbara—this afternoon. I'll walk into town and take the bus to Putnam. . . . I have to go to Putnam myself today said Miss Billings. I could drive you over.

They looked at each other. Miss Billings saw what she had expected in the girl's eyes—consternation. To go now would be the best thing said Miss Billings. Only—there must be things you intended to do. If it could be put off for a day or so. But it can't! Barbara said. I think it can said Miss Billings. Here—write a note to Jack telling him not to come until he hears from you. I'll take it over and deliver it in person. And your father will be watching—so don't call Jack or anything. And tonight your father will have missed the letter from the glove compartment and he'll think you've found it. You might leave the envelope around where he'll see it so he'll be quite sure. Then tomorrow night he'll expect you to be pretty jumpy. And if you're gay and unconcerned it will throw him off the track. Then you can make better arrangements.

Miss Billings realized that her proposal wouldn't bear close analysis but to her satisfaction Barbara accepted the pencil and water-color block she held out and started to write a note. She hadn't finished when a car rolled up. Oh hell! said Barbara and then she said Excuse me and scribbled faster as a rather nice looking young man got out of the car and stood there looking at her with a sort of adoring expectancy. Barbara folded the sheet and handed it to Miss Billings. What do you want? she said.

We had a date for tennis at three said the young man. Barbara sniffed at him. Miss Billings she said This is Andrew Dunham the human timepiece. If you want to set your watch I can tell you that it is exactly three P.M. I can't play today Andrew she said I'm busy. Andrew said Oh. Let's make it tomorrow Barbara said and he said All right tomorrow at three and went.

Miss Billings said Who's Andrew? Barbara said Oh why he's just—Andrew. He's father's candidate she said—can you imagine? Gosh—Andrew! He seems rather stupid said Miss Billings who had thought exactly the opposite. Oh no said Barbara he's not stupid. I guess he's an awfully good lawyer too. But he doesn't—well I guess he doesn't know much about girls. Well said Miss Billings I must start for Putnam. I'll see you tomorrow.

SO Miss Billings drove to Putnam and went to the real-estate office and asked for Mr. Eustis. And when she saw him he was just what she had thought he would be. He was handsome enough and smooth and cold-eyed under his suavity with the stale flourish of a thin mustache on his lip. So Miss Billings put on a foolish smile and said Oh I've been having such a time Mr. Eustis—and I do hope you can help me! Then Miss Billings explained what her work was and that there were houses in Putnam she wanted to paint but in order to do so she would have to have a studio and she couldn't find one. Mr. Eustis was a pretty good salesman so he said he knew just the thing and reached for his hat. But before he got it Miss Billings had opened her portfolio and said You see this is the sort of thing I do.

So then of course Mr. Eustis had to look at the sketches which he did with polite mumblings. Until he came to the third sketch when he gave a sort of start and said Why that is— The Allen house in Silchester said Miss Billings. You know it? Why yes said Mr. Eustis. I'm afraid that represents one of my mistakes said Miss Billings. You see I usually make a picture of a house in the expectation that I can sell it to the owner but I have to make sure first that the owner can afford to pay my price. I suppose you think I'm dreadfully commercial! Not at all said Mr. Eustis. But Mr. Allen surely can afford to pay. Oh dear that is what I thought too she said—his being a banker and everything. But— She broke off. Oh dear she said I'm afraid I am saying more than I should.

Mr. Eustis' eyes had got very sharp and he said I can assure you that whatever you say will go no further. But I have always heard that the Allen fortune was one of the largest in Silchester. That may be said Miss Billings but—well I've said so much that I might as well continue. My Cousin Henry says there isn't enough of the Allen fortune left to pay the cost of defending the Crandall suit. The Crandall suit? said Mr. Eustis. And Miss Billings said Yes—I don't understand these things very well but Mr. Allen was trustee for the Crandall estate and evidently he speculated and lost it all. My Cousin Henry is the lawyer for the Crandall heirs.

She smiled her most foolish smile and said Dear! I do feel sorry for that little Allen girl! All the money her mother left her is gone too Henry said. Do you know her? She seems rather a silly child.

Mr. Eustis said he remembered her faintly and had thought her quite uninteresting. There was suspicion and consternation in his cold eyes but rather more of the latter. Miss Billings said Dear me I'm afraid you'll think me a dreadfully gossipy old woman wasting your time like this. Now to come back to my studio—

Mr. Eustis came back to the studio but he didn't stay there. He kept harking back to Mr. Allen with adroit questions which Miss Billings parried and at last he said that he really didn't know any suitable studio.

MISS BILLINGS got in her car and drove to Silchester. On the way she stopped and told Barbara that she had given Jack the note and explained what had happened and that he would wait until Barbara could call him up. I don't know why you're so good to me Barbara said. Good gracious I'm having a wonderful time! said Miss Billings.

Her next action was I think pretty inexcusable. Back in her hotel room she took the note that Barbara had written to Mr. Eustis and examined it closely: "Don't come for me tomorrow. Don't phone or anything until you hear from me. Father read your letter and is on the warpath. I love you. Barbara."

Miss Billings read it twice and a smile broke over her face. She got out the same pencil Barbara had used and crossed out the words "read your letter and" so that they could not be read and she crossed out the words "I love you" so they could be read. And then she put the note in a blank envelope and went out to find Andrew Dunham's law office.

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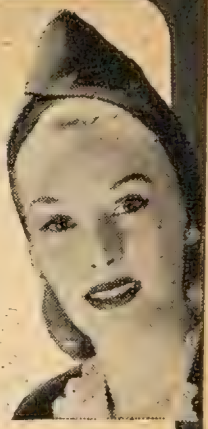

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Miss Billings was working on the principle that if a situation is unsatisfactory the best thing to do is mix it up thoroughly. It can't get worse and it may improve. Miss Billings handed the note to a girl in Mr. Dunham's office and she said she'd see he got it that evening. Then Miss Billings went back to the hotel very much pleased. For she felt that she had mixed things up good.

After lunch next day Miss Billings went out to the Allens' again. She had long ago finished her first sketch of the house so she started another. And to amuse herself she added a few romantic details. She put a ladder against one of the upper windows and a girl with brown hair coming down. Standing at the foot of the ladder she put Mr. Eustis.

AT three five Barbara came to the front door and looked down the road. She waved to Miss Billings and disappeared. At three ten she came out with a tennis racket and sat down beside the easel. Are you expecting someone? Miss Billings asked. And Barbara said Why Andrew was coming at three. Perhaps he forgot said Miss Billings. He never forgets anything said Barbara.

She sat quietly for awhile and then all at once she jumped up and ran into the house.

Miss Billings was pleased. She had created a misunderstanding between Andrew and Barbara and when a relationship has become as static as theirs seemed to be a good misunderstanding can start a lot of things. But a few minutes later Barbara came dashing out again and said I think you've got something to explain Miss Billings—I've just talked to Andrew on the phone.

Miss Billings hadn't expected that. Dear me—really? she said. Yes—really! Barbara said sarcastically—and he read me the note you left for him—the note I gave you to take to Jack. I don't believe you ever saw Jack she went on furiously. I bet—I bet you're in league with father! And I suppose he'll pay you by buying your silly old picture.

Gracious I'm frightfully sorry about your note said Miss Billings. Mr. Eustis left it lying on the desk when he went out and I picked it up. So careless of him I thought and I wanted to bring it back to you. And then I suppose I must have dropped it in Mr. Dunham's office.

I don't believe you said Barbara flatly. Andrew said you left it with his girl—in an envelope. But why? Why? Why drag Andrew into it? Did you and father think he'd rise up and forbid the banns or something? Oh I think you're awful—worming yourself in here—

Miss Billings didn't listen very attentively. She was thinking. She said I'm afraid I haven't been very helpful. Though I should think if you explained to Mr. Dunham about the note—

Explain! Barbara said—Explain that Jack— Oh she exclaimed then Jack will come tonight! That's what you wanted isn't it? Oh I must call him! And she started for the house.

Wait a minute said Miss Billings. Oh I do think you're very foolish. If you call him from home it will be reported to your father won't it? Really I do want to help you Barbara. Come—I'll drive you down to the hotel if you feel you must phone him and you can put in the call from my room.

Come along said Miss Billings and Barbara went.

She didn't say anything on the way down to the hotel and Miss Billings didn't either. Up in her room Miss Billings said There's the phone.

She heard Barbara ask for a Putnam number and then say May I speak to Mr. Eustis? . . . Oh is this you Jack? Jack I had to call you—you mustn't come for me tonight. Listen—did anybody deliver a . . . What! You what? . . . You weren't coming! But then you must have got the . . . *You* decided! How about *we* decided? . . . Well I *am* listening.

For a minute or so Miss Billings didn't hear anything and then Barbara said bitterly Oh yes—sure! Sure I understand! Sure—common sense is just dandy! Well I'm glad you had your attack of it before we went away rather than after. . . . Oh no thanks—I don't think I care to hear any more. There was a crash as the receiver was slammed back.

Miss Billings waited a few minutes. Barbara was just sitting there with her hands in her lap and crying quietly, and when Miss Billings asked her if Mr. Eustis had said anything about the note she just said dully. We didn't mention it. Then she looked up. I suppose you think I ought to thank you she said. Mercy no Miss Billings said. I haven't done anything my dear child.

THERE was a tap at the door and Miss Billings opened it. There was Andrew. You'll excuse my coming up he said but I saw Barbara come in with you and— He walked over to the girl. I had to see you he said and if your father objects—Objects! Barbara exclaimed. And he said Well I gathered that from your note. But I keep telling you that I didn't write that note to you she said. Well it's your writing isn't it? he demanded. Then a thought struck him. Oh he said suddenly I see! It was intended for Jack Eustis wasn't it? Stupid of me—that should have occurred to me. He bowed to Miss Billings. Sorry to have intruded he said and reached for the doorknob.

But Barbara said sharply It was *not* written to Jack Eustis! I'm not—I haven't seen Jack in weeks and don't intend to! Andrew's face cleared. You mean you— he began and then he looked puzzled and said But the note—

Barbara sat up stiffly and braced her shoulders for a desperate improvisation. If you must know said the girl that was a note I wrote you years ago. One day when—well father saw me kiss you. I never sent it but it was in my desk and when I wrote you yesterday that I couldn't meet you for tennis I—I must have picked it up by mistake.

Very weak Miss Billings thought but Andrew merely asked why Barbara had written—why not phone?

Because your phone was busy and Miss Billings was going down! Barbara shouted at him. Oh stop asking for explanations! Explain this—explain that—everybody at me all the time! Oh let me alone! And she burst into tears. And Miss Billings looked at Andrew and then she went out and shut the door behind her and went down into the coffee shop and had a good strong pot of tea.

So that evening Miss Billings put her portfolio of sketches under her arm and drove out to the Allens' again. As she turned into their street she saw Andrew coming away from the house. I wish you'd tell me he said what there is to all this. Barbara won't see me tonight. I just thought I'd ask for you seemed to be in Barbara's confidence. Oh no Miss Billings said. I'm just doing a water color of the house. I'm taking it out now to show to Mr. Allen. It's quite pretty I think. Do you suppose he might buy it?

Andrew grinned faintly. Have you ever tried to sell Mr. Allen anything? he asked. No she said but I have sold pictures to quite a number of people. Not to Allen he said—I'll lay you a little bet you don't make the sale. Oh goodness said Miss Billings. But—here—get in the car a minute.

SO he got in and she turned to him and said I suppose I'm being dreadfully personal but—you'd like to marry Barbara wouldn't you? Well—yes he said—but she's engaged to Eustis. What difference does that make? she said. You're not very aggressive! Good gracious it doesn't do you any good to sit under a willow tree with crepe on your hat and weep!

You make me sound pretty foolish said Andrew. And she said I think you are but that needn't bother you and Barbara doesn't think you're foolish. But about our bet. If I sell my picture to Mr. Allen will you do something? Andrew said Well—And Miss Billings said Barbara said she loved you in the note didn't she?

Why yes he said but she'd crossed it out. But what do you want me to do?

I only want you she said to take the note as read. You know she wrote it and you know she wrote it yesterday. But her father wasn't sore at me Andrew said. Maybe she just wrote that to see what you'd do—to get a reaction out of you said Miss Billings. And you want me to react said Andrew—it's a large order. Well I gather selling my picture is too she said. Oh well let me go in now. He said I'll go in with you.

So old Martha let them in. She said to Andrew Miss Barbara just said she didn't want to see you. I'll wait here in the hall he said. So Martha shrugged and showed Miss Billings into the living room.

The Allens were both there and she beamed at them but they didn't beam back. She said to Mr. Allen I thought you'd like to see my little water color of your house and she fumbled around in her portfolio and brought out her first sketch.

Mr. Allen nodded coldly. It's very pretty he said politely. Then with a frosty smile he said I'm sorry that I didn't make it more clear when you started your sketch that I wouldn't be interested in buying a picture of my house. I am afraid I may have encouraged you to waste your time. Not at all said Miss Billings I thought I explained that they were not for sale. That would be just good salesmanship wouldn't it? he said. And Miss Billings said Oh I'm afraid I'm not very clever at salesmanship and Barbara sniffed behind her magazine.

THEN Miss Billings fumbled again and said I made another I'd like to show you and she brought out the second sketch on which she had drawn the ladder and the eloping pair.

Mr. Allen started violently when he saw it. I always like to have the human interest in my pictures Miss Billings said and this house makes such a romantic setting. Just the setting for an elopement. But you see as I'm having a little show of my things at the Silchester library next week—some of the ladies on the library committee have been kind enough to say that it might be of interest!

Barbara came across to look over her father's shoulder. Oh! she said. Dad you'll have to— Yes he said. How much do you want for it? Why dear me—do you really like it as much as that? she tittered. Why I'm highly flattered.

How much? he said. For both of them? You might decide to put some human interest in the first one later on. Oh no said Miss Billings. I never alter a sketch once it's dry. How much? Well said Miss Billings shall we say a hundred dollars? Oh please! she said as he gave an angry exclamation. I realize that is a high price but I expect them to rouse much more interest locally than my other things. So Mr. Allen went to his desk and wrote out a check for $100.

On her way out through the hall Miss Billings stopped before Andrew who was smoking a cigarette. She showed him the check. Boy he said you're good! How about taking me in and see what I'd bring? Oh my dear young man she said you're already sold but don't know it. All you need is a little patience. And she patted his arm and went out to her car.

THE END

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Pick of
THE PICTURES
BY
VIRGINIA SPIES

HOLIDAY IN MEXICO

IN this lavish, highly lacquered musical, life for a south-of-the-border diplomat is all play and no protocol—in short, a technicolored holiday in Mexico.

Walter Pidgeon, as a U. S. Ambassador, concentrates strictly on domestic affairs by strolling in various patios with Ilona Massey and, in his spare time, patching up the puppy love-life of his sweet-singing daughter, Jane Powell.

Between musical numbers, there's plenty of patching to do. Jane thinks she's outgrown Roddy McDowall, her teen-aged swain, and imagines herself in love with pianist Jose Iturbi. It takes Pidgeon's smoothest diplomacy to cut Jane down to Roddy's size and keep everyone happy.

Like most film songfests, Holiday in Mexico has a lot of trills. Jane, bright young hope of Producer Joe Pasternak (he groomed Deanna Durbin) deftly wraps her soprano voice around such Durbinesque numbers as Schubert's Ave Maria and the Italian Street Song. Iturbi has a family musicale at M-G-M's expense as he plays boogie-woogie nursery tunes for his grandchildren and joins his sister, Ampara, in a more sedate duet. Rumba maestro Xavier Cugat checks in now and then with a Latin medley and Ilona, cast as his singer, beams a torchy love song in Pidgeon's direction.

Despite this high-priced competition, the youngsters steal scenes like the Mexicans steal ballplayers. For both, the movie featured big firsts. It's fifteen-year-old Jane's first big part and one which boosts her to stardom. And Roddy, who took his first shave at the cameraman's order, smokes his first pipe, wears his first dinner jacket and, with Flicka forgotten, drives his first jaloppy.

All in all, it's a gay holiday for movie-goers.

Jane Powell, Metro's fifteen-year-old singer, stands by with awe as famous pianist Jose Iturbi mugs and makes beautiful music.

Free

Long the movies' ideal husband, Walter Pidgeon has been promoted to fatherhood and now gets a send-off from daughter Jane.

It's one siesta and fiesta after another for beautiful Ilona Massey and her escort.

Jane condescends to go to Roddy McDowall's party, but she usually prefers older men.

OTHER PICTURES WORTH SEEING

THE BIG SLEEP (Warner Brothers). Raymond Chandler's hard-boiled whodunit is a perfect backdrop for the talents of Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall.

NOTORIOUS (RKO). Ingrid Bergman and Cary Grant spy and sigh their way through Alfred Hitchcock's engrossing south-of-the-border thriller.

MR. ACE (United Artists). An amusing poke at ladies in politics with Sylvia Sidney and George Raft capably holding down the leading parts.

CLAUDIA AND DAVID (20th Century-Fox). A sequel to Claudia, this movie gives Dorothy McGuire and Robert Young a new batch of crises and chuckles.

MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE (Paramount). A laugh-a-minute version of the Tarkington romance with Bob Hope in the role once made famous by Rudolph Valentino.

THREE WISE FOOLS (M-G-M). Margaret O'Brien, with a delightful Irish brogue, brings leprechauns into the lives of Lionel Barrymore and two cronies.

CENTENNIAL SUMMER (20th Century-Fox). Jerome Kern's score, plus Jeanne Crain, Cornel Wilde, and a big cast, makes this a pleasant Philadelphia story.

CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA (G.C.F., released through United Artists). Vivien Leigh and Claude Rains have the leads in this handsome spectacle adapted from the G. B. Shaw comedy.

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And it baffles us to find words that convey to you the moods, the lights and shadows, the unusualness that make "Undercurrent" such a rare and exciting motion picture.

★ ★ ★ ★

But let's try. We'll begin with Katharine Hepburn. She plays a girl of innocent and haunting beauty—her acting is dramatic quicksilver; one moment completely gay, the next serene in her love, then filled with terror at the unknown threat that hovers over her life.

And forgive this irrelevancy—she wears *such* attractive clothes with *such* wonderful grace that we predict untold millions of envious sighs.

★ ★ ★ ★

Then, of course, there's handsome Robert Taylor and anything we could say about his performance in "Undercurrent" would be an understatement.

★ ★ ★ ★

"Undercurrent" is not only the best possible vehicle for Taylor's return to the screen, but it is also the picture in which he creates—believe us—one of the most sensational male roles in film history.

★ ★ ★ ★

We won't tell you exactly why we think so—it would spoil the suspense of the picture—but we know you'll agree with us when you see Bob as the brilliant young tycoon whose life is haunted by a strange and disturbing dread.

★ ★ ★ ★

Robert Mitchum and all the cast have been chosen with rare dramatic judgment to give "Undercurrent" its startling quality.

★ ★ ★ ★

A special commendation goes to Edward Chodorov for his powerful and imaginative script, based on a story by Thelma Strabel.

★ ★ ★ ★

And to Pandro S. Berman who produced it, and Vincente Minnelli who directed it, go our thanks for a truly daring and memorable film.

★ ★

Yes, we were swept away by "Undercurrent". You'll be, too.

—Leo

GOVERNMENT BY GOBBLEDYGOOK

Continued from Page 13

is a vast confusion in our federal administration.

Adding to the confusion is a group of pleasant young men who have become part of a new governing class that has taken root in Washington during the last dozen years. It seems that they insist on doing good even if it kills us.

Everyone can, of course, make his own definition of a bureaucrat. Perhaps a bureaucrat is anybody in public office whom you don't like. But the group I call bureaucrats are the zealous reformers who cluster mostly about the independent agencies and are intent on making us over on some pattern of their own. They are clever and energetic, but a good deal of their energy is spent in stretching the statutes so that they'll have room to do things Congress never intended.

It should be our job to see that, with the war out of the way, the undoubted talents of these gentlemen are directed into channels designated by the people's representatives. If they remain too independent, we should encourage them to find another employer.

A GOOD many responsible federal jobs have been filled in the last dozen years by men fresh from the campus. A number of them found remarkably rapid advancement in government, especially in the quick-growing war agencies. At the Board ef Economic Warfare, for example, a former law student, whose meteoric government career had flashed through several other agencies, wound up at $7,500 as the boss of his old professor, who was getting only $6,500. In the same bureau a man who had been a Navy Yard messenger at $1,080 a year in 1940 was by late 1942 a senior business analyst at $4,600.

One important employee of the War Shipping Administration, with no business experience, was kept on the payroll despite a long F.B.I. report connecting him with fellow-traveler organizations. In fact, our committee discovered, he remained on two WSA payrolls for several months, one at $7,500 a year in New York and one at $5,800 a year in Washington. He was forced to repay more than $900 overdrawn in this way, and admitted it was very careless of him to accept double pay.

A good many of the professors came to Washington on leave from their universities. With the government now overstaffed, and shortage of teachers everywhere, a number seem to feel that this is an appropriate time to return to the campus with their federal laurels. I, for one, am not going to dispute this.

The professors, however, are not the only people in government fascinated by theory. Some of the top OPA men, for instance, those with business experience, have theories of price control that have always been most plausible and have helped them get appropriations. But the proof of the pudding they have baked comes in the eating.

I won't offer to eat it, but I should like to see the old prewar dollar shirt, for example, come back at some reasonable price. The average American thought that by 1946 he ought to be able to buy one, at least for several times its old price tag. But he was lucky if he could find a white shirt for any money, even a décolleté sports model. The OPA had saved the low price tag, but there was no shirt attached.

Taking advantage of all this laxity and helter-skelter, many of the executive agencies also have set themselves up in the last ten years as little legislatures. They make law by issuing directives, or orders.

Even the word "directive" is new to general usage. It apparently came from the military, along with "echelon" and "liaison." "Directive" is properly the most important word in the new government jargon, or gobbledygook. In this District of Columbia wonderland things are coordinated at the policy level pursuant to administrative imperatives. At the operating level they are processed, implemented, activated and deactivated by armies of consultants, counsel, analysts, economists, specialists, and chiefs of this and that. Finally they reach the bewildered common citizen as a printed or mimeographed document of baffling complexity.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Representative Smith, a former Virginia judge who has served in Congress for sixteen years, is chairman of a House committee with a long name and a long arm—the Select Committee to Investigate Acts of Executive Agencies Which Exceed Their Authority—that has been examining bureaucrats under its official microscope for several years. He was co-author of the Smith-Connally Labor Disputes Act and author of the Alien Registration Act.]

The executive agency not only issues its own laws; it usually acts also as prosecutor, judge, and jury. Sometimes it completes its little independent government by being its own policeman too.

This tendency was noted well before the war. The U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals, in reviewing the handling of a case by the National Labor Relations Board, remarked in 1940 that the record disclosed "the danger of imposing upon a single agency the multiple duties of prosecutor, judge, jury and executioner."

The NLRB was a product of the starry-eyed period of the New Deal. It attempted to black-list employers by preventing them from getting government contracts even before they were tried. In at least one case it endeavored to abet the boycott of a knitting mill by a department store. It also lobbied in Congress, solicited charges by labor against employers, hired employees of obvious bias, and gave a perfect picture of nonjudicial administration.

Partly as a result of revelations by our committee in 1940, the top personnel was changed and the conduct of the agency improved.

Among the war agencies, the OPA was the favorite example of usurped power and rigid formulas. In the glorious early days of OPA, the bureaucrats went high, wide, and handsome. They did not hesitate to change prevailing business practices, contrary to a specific provision inserted by Congress in the original OPA law. In enforcing rent regulations they set aside state and local laws, forced landlords to operate at a loss, and smeared them as a greedy and grasping class. When it came to price fixing, the OPA set up its own courts, and succeeded in confusing the public as to its procedure.

THE great mass of regulations and interpretations which the OPA issued was written largely by obscure functionaries having little business experience, and was approved after only a quick gander by the officials who had the responsibility.

The House once adopted a most revolutionary amendment to an OPA bill. It provided that nobody could take part in pricing who had not had five years' continuous experience in the business affected. If the Senate had accepted this novel doctrine, there would have been a considerable turnover in the Office of Price Administration, and the thing might have spread all over Washington.

I think the Senate was sorry that it didn't go along with the House. For some months later a Southern member listed for his colleagues' information the six men he said controlled cotton policy at OPA. He described four of them as college professors with doctors' degrees, one as a former student of economics who had joined the C.I.O., and the sixth as a lawyer. The lawyer was the only one with any business experience, said the senator — five months' practice. None of them had ever been in textiles or cotton.

But that made no difference to OPA. It could shrug off the ignorance of its staff as cheerfully as it washed its hands of the blood of manufacturers who were put out of business by the squeeze between costs and ceilings. It glibly classified such manufacturers as "war casualties." Officials of this agency, in their zeal to do good, reached out for power they did not have.

The National War Labor Board was another emergency agency that exceeded its authority. By adopting a modified closed shop as a general policy it encouraged every union not having closed-shop agreements to start labor disputes. The resulting cases were so numerous that the board was unable to handle them.

By fixing wages without regard to an employer's ability to pay, it threatened to push some of them into bankruptcy. Further, the board forced employers and workers into compulsory arbitration, in violation of their constitutional rights.

The WLB has gone, and all the wartime bureaus will follow it in time into their proper limbo—the National Archives. I have cited some of the abuses of the war agencies because they are striking illustrations of what we must avoid in the future. And we must not forget the vast amount of regulatory power in the hands of the permanent and presumably more sober bureaus.

More or less authority over business and individuals is exercised by all the Cabinet departments—State, Treasury, War, Justice, Post Office, Navy, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, and Labor. Maybe you're not a farmer, so you won't deal directly with Agriculture. And maybe you don't supply goods or services, so you won't want a government contract. But you may need a passport from State, a patent from Commerce, second-class mailing privileges from the Post Office, or help with a labor dispute. And there's one department you'll certainly deal with—you'll pay taxes to the Treasury.

NOW look at this imposing list (and it's only partial) of independent agencies and establishments with one or more of which you may have to deal:

Civil Service Commission, Export-Import Bank, Federal Communications Commission, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Federal Loan Agency (RFC), Federal Power Commission, Federal Reserve System, Federal Security Agency, Federal Trade Commission, Federal Works Agency.

After we get out of the Fs, we come to Interstate Commerce Commission, Maritime Commission, National Housing Agency (FHA), National Labor Relations Board, Securities and Exchange Commission, Tariff Commission, Tennessee Valley Authority, and Veteran Administration.

What is your protection from the army of federal do-gooders? How can we keep all these departments, bureaus, agencies, boards, and establishments from constituting an uncontrolled bureaucracy in which the citizen wanders bewildered and forlorn?

The simplest answer to the problem would be to install throughout the government competent men who would do their best to carry out the will of Congress. But that is easier said than done, particularly with the large number of gay reformers who have dug themselves so securely into federal jobs during the last few years.

And once we really get good men, capable of and willing to carry out orders from the Hill, it's hard to keep them. Government executives are expected to maintain living standards comparable with those of men in private life with whom they deal, and to do some entertaining. If they don't have private income, some feel it's unfair to their families to stay on. Furthermore, now that the war is over, the patriotic motive isn't so strong.

In consequence, despite the inducements that public service offers, we have lately been losing a number of competent administrators in the sub-Cabinet rank. Most of them have gone to business, which can offer them several times the $10,000 which has been the ceiling on almost all government executive and legislative salaries. The new international organizations, such as the Bank and Monetary Fund set up after Bretton Woods, also have a higher scale, and it's tax-exempt.

OUR government obviously can't compete with private business on salaries. So the cure for bureaucracy can't be simply to top the bids of other employers for outstanding administrators. But Congress has lately done several constructive things, and can do more.

One important step just taken, after ten years' study, is adoption of the Administrative Procedure Act. This simplifies the law, sets minimum standards for procedure throughout the government, and notifies the citizen of the treatment to which he is entitled when he presents a plea.

It requires every agency to make public its organization and its procedure. There are no more secret rules. Previously some of the agencies just sat back and answered questions with careful reserve. Each agency's opinions and orders are to be published or open for inspection, and official records are to be shown to those persons with a serious interest.

In partial answer to complaints about the prosecutor being also the judge, the new law provides that examiners are to be appointed under Civil Service rules, removable only for cause. They are to preside impartially, and to make or recommend decisions based on the evidence, after submission of suggestions from the interested parties.

Except where existing law forbids it (as in some Interstate Commerce Commission cases), anyone suffering a legal wrong in a case before a government department is now entitled to a review in court.

The publicity features of the new law apply to the war agencies, but on the assumption that these bureaus are about to disappear, they are exempt from the rest. Similar agencies created in future emergencies will be subject to it.

The Procedure Act is good as far as it goes, but, like most legislation, it is a compromise. The agencies themselves have become skilled lobbyists, and they managed to block some changes that would have dis-

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turbed their routine. The law should be amended to provide a more complete segregation of judicial from administrative functions, perhaps by setting up a real administrative court to serve all departments. Each agency is still, in a measure, accuser and judge. I hope also that future amendments will provide an actual code of procedure for all departments, rather than merely setting standards and letting each agency write its own.

And I hope the exceptions from the right to judicial review will be wiped out.

Another thing Congress must do is to draft its own legislation and not merely adopt the ready-made laws that come in from the executive departments. A further job for Congress is to define exactly the authority and duties of the executive agencies in the legislation which sets up and regulates them. If this isn't done, as has been repeatedly proved, they write their own tickets.

Congress is taking another forward step in the recently enacted La Follette-Monroney Reorganization Act of 1946 (the so-called Congressional streamlining bill). This measure will reduce the standing committees to less than half the present number so that they will parallel roughly the government departments, and give them the authority and the staff to keep a continuous check on the administrative agencies. Each committee is to have at least four experts to help oversee the agencies, and is to have the power of subpoena.

This arrangement should enable Congress to keep a tighter rein on the executive branch.

Eternal vigilance promises to be the price not only of peace but of good government.

THE END

THE CURSE OF THE PRYORS

Continued from Page 15

"Not on twenty-four hours' notice," she shrugged.

"On a month's?" Scott persisted.

"I don't know. But if we ever finish this run of bad luck—"

Scott did not smile. Bad luck—off seasons . . . he'd heard them all. You could lump them under the heading: Poor management.

He noticed her face in the mirror above the fireplace. With the light coming from below, her cheekbones were outlined sharply and the shadow of her lashes reached her brows. He thought for a moment that he had seen her before. The name, Michael Pryor, had a familiar ring. Financial page? Society?

"I don't know why it is," he said presently, "but when I look at you I keep thinking about debutante teas and charity balls."

She gave him a sharp glance. "Now, isn't that odd? When I look at you I think of anything *but* charity! I'll have a girl take you to your room, Mr. Scott; you'll want to wash up before dinner. You're in the *casita*, the little house up on the hill." As he went out, Kay called after him, "By the way, we have another guest—a lady. You'll like her. She'll make you think of all sorts of things!"

THE *casita* was a sort of tower on a knoll two hundred yards beyond the hacienda walls. The bed was a weary-looking affair in the lower room; by a precarious ladder one ascended to an upper room fitted out with a table and chair. Scott unpacked by lamplight. He heard a rattle of pebbles from a distance. A splash. Someone shouted, "Ysidoro! *Ven acá, dammit!*"

From the vantage of the knoll, down the sides of which tumbled a dozen windowless workers' shacks, Scott had a view of the large pond across the tracks.

He stood there, the breeze bringing him the fragrance of charcoal fires. An Indian girl with a water jug balanced on her shoulder climbed the slope from the pond. The hacienda lay below him, a vast walled city of barns and buildings, lights burning behind a few grilled windows.

He closed the door and set about making a fire. Within sixty seconds the room was full of smoke. The chimney was stopped up.

Scott, swearing bitterly, threw water on the fire and opened the door and windows to the wind.

THE dining room was lofty and not quite warm. The table would have seated twenty and the sideboard had the capacity of a boxcar. On its porcelain top was arranged a supply of liquors. Kay, already seated, was reading a Mexico City newspaper. Scott took a seat next to her.

Right then, Michael Pryor came in. Scott knew at once he would be "Mike" to practically anybody. He was dressed in a sweat shirt, gray slacks, and tennis shoes. He had ample weight around the belt, and his skin was the color of terra cotta.

His grip was cordial. He said, "Glad to know you, Scott." For one whose property was about to be foreclosed, he was out of character. Then he walked to the sideboard and studied labels. "Where's *la belle dame sans merci?*" he asked.

"Don't be funny," Kay said. "Just because she's in mourning—I suppose I should explain," she said to Scott. "Her name is Anita de Vega. She's a sort of war widow—a Spanish Loyalist. It seems her husband had to get out of Spain during the civil war. The man who owned San Marcos at that time was a Loyalist sympathizer. He put de Vega up; but after he left, Anita never heard from him. She's traced him this far, and now she doesn't know where to turn."

A door opened quietly and the widow entered. She was a slim dark girl. There were young curves under the fitted blackness of her dress; soft warm curves.

Pryor held her chair.

She smiled at Scott. "You intend to stay some time, señor?"

"Quién sabe?" he replied. He loved that phrase.

Then she lighted a cigarette with a flourish that displayed small expressive hands. "How I envy you the little *casita del picacho!* So quaint and lonely."

"Maybe we can make a trade," Scott suggested. "That is, if your fireplace works. Mine doesn't."

Pryor grunted. "Meant to check that. Leave a chimney unused for one season, and you've got a colony of vultures in it. I'll see that it's fixed."

AFTER dessert, Anita went to her room. Scott decided it was time to discuss business. "I came down here at the request of Woodworth & Stone, Mr. Pryor. I suppose you know why."

Pryor refilled his glass. "I could make a guess. This is getting to be a habit—sharp-eyed young gentlemen dropping in to look over my books." At Scott's stare, he chuckled. "Didn't you look me up in the Doomsday Book? The last time I went broke was in L. A., six years ago."

Kay spoke. "Dad."

Pryor went on: "You haven't forgotten the Inter-States mess? Of course they never hung anything on us—but did they try! I was the top nut, so the name under most of the cuts was mine."

Kay rose, icily calm. "Shall we go in by the fire?" She passed into the shadowed warmth of the *sala,* with her chin high.

Pryor secured his glass and the unfinished fifth of amontillado. "The kid," he told Scott, "is a little sensitive about my debacle. I was pretty sore myself, for a while. Because, by heaven, nobody ever got jobbed any neater than I did. I lost not only the stockholders' money but my own!"

Scott understood, now, why at first Pryor's name had tugged at his memory. The Inter-States Investment thing had dragged through the courts for weeks. About all he recalled was that a million and a half had blown sky-high in wildcat investments, and a few hundred stockholders were out for scalps. But no one was ever convicted, unless it was Pryor, whom the papers had thoroughly smeared without ever quite becoming libellous.

Kay seated herself near the fire. Scott glanced over his papers.

"As I get it," Scott remarked finally, "there are a few other creditors besides us."

"One or two. It's not exactly that I'm insolvent: my obligations just happen to exceed my assets."

Scott liked his coolness. "I'll be frank with you," he said. "If the ranch looks as though it could be put on a paying basis, I'll recommend that the company carry you for six months. If it doesn't—" He hesitated.

Pryor stepped in: "I guess that's my cue to get down on my knees and promise to stop using operating money to play the ponies and winter in Taxco. But all I can promise is to keep on trying. I'll tell you a secret: I've dubbed everything I ever tackled. I paid seventy thousand pesos for this place and made twenty per cent on my investment the first two years. Then things started going to hell. The curse of the Pryors. It makes us add when we should subtract. We sign notes for the wrong people."

"Your daughter," Scott prompted, "says you've been having bad luck."

Pryor linked his fingers behind his head. "They tell me you make your own luck. But it's tough, at that, when cows get poisoned on *remolacha,* and the truck stalls with five hundred pesos' worth of milk which spoils before it ever reaches town."

Scott frowned. "I don't see why *remolacha* should have hurt them. It's just an oversized sugar beet, isn't it?"

"With a chunk of poison in the heart of it," Pryor pointed out, "twice as big as your thumb. It makes the best feed you can raise; but you've got to cut out those crystals or you're going to lose cows. Once in a while a workman gets careless. Or maybe it isn't carelessness. Indians are peculiar. Sometimes you never know you've offended one of them until he disappears with everything that isn't nailed down. There was no reason for the truck to break down last week, either. But when I went after it, I found five of the plugs cracked!"

"How did they ever get it out of the barn?"

"That's what I asked Don Gonzalo. He said it was missing a little, but he thought it would warm up. All that warmed up was the milk. Of course it's possible," Pryor said ironically, "that a dairy rancher wouldn't make out any better as a playboy than I do as a dairy rancher."

Kay came in impatiently! "To listen to him, you'd think he was an armchair rancher! But he's out there every day, when they plow and when they irrigate and when they milk. And yet things never quite work out—" She was beginning to sound hurt, and, as if suddenly realizing it, she stood up. "And if you don't mind a suggestion, why don't we all go to bed and go over this in the morning? You'll learn more on the ground than you will this way."

PRYOR obtained a flashlight and they left the hacienda. "Got any more of those cigarettes, Bill?"

Scott gave him a full pack. "American cigarettes—American liquor—American women!" Pryor sighed. "You won't find their equal anywhere."

"Maybe you should have stayed home," Scott suggested.

"Maybe, hell! I'd like to go back tomorrow. And yet—you know how it is—just for once I'd like to come out of the ring standing up!"

THE next day was Saturday. On Hacienda San Marcos, as on ranches all over the republic, workmen lined up for their silver-and-corn wages. After they were paid, Pryor and Scott, with Don Gonzalo in the back seat, drove to the fields. They were opposite a hundred-acre patch of young corn, a regiment of rich green spears thrusting from the dark earth, when suddenly Pryor stopped. He was squinting at something across the field. "Dammit!" he said. "That whole lower quarter is washed out!" He confronted the foreman. "I told them to cut the water off last night. Why wasn't it done?"

Don Gonzalo sat stiffly against the cushions, brown and lean and offended. "Vicente told me the gate did not desire to operate. Arturo was injured. The water was not shut off until this morning."

Pryor swore and tramped over to inspect the damage. New soil would have to be hauled in to replace the tons washed away. Scott inspected the head gate. It was the most primitive device conceivable: concrete revetments at each side were slotted for logs, which raised the stream to the level of the *zanja.*

"For twenty dollars," he said curtly, "you could have had a foolproof gate that would work when you wanted it to."

They returned to the hacienda and Scott spent most of the afternoon going over the books, after which he made an unannounced trip to the grain shed. On a sudden hunch, he walked down the river again and inspected the head gate. In his room, then, he tried to think it through. He had turned up some things that were not pretty. But his heart said, "He's a swell old gaffer and deserves a break."

At dusk he discovered Pryor and Don Gonzalo on the long gallery before the hacienda.

Pryor asked dryly, "Am I mistaken, or do I hear the Voice of Doom?"

"Your hearing's good," Scott stated. "You're a hell of a fine host, Mike, but you're no business man at all. The profit's been here for the taking, but you haven't taken it. In the first place, I checked on the prices of dairy products in Mexico City on my way down here. You're a long way from getting the top."

Pryor glanced at the foreman. "Why aren't we? You handle it."

Don Gonzalo's long body was hunched forward. "They say our milk is not good when it arrives. So long a distance—"

Scott grunted. "I could talk for an hour, but here it is in a capsule: There's enough slack on this place to wreck a dozen ranches. With things the way they are, I couldn't recommend that we carry you another twenty-four hours. And yet,

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dammit, you've got a gold mine here, if you'd only work it!"

Pryor looked bewildered and a little angry. Don Gonzalo's eyes were on Scott. "So do I get a receiver or a governess?" Pryor asked.

"It's your choice. I've got an idea I could put San Marcos in the black inside of six months. Tomorrow I'm going up to Huamantla to phone Los Angeles. If you're willing to work with me a couple of months, I'll recommend a six months' extension."

Pryor sank back in the chair. "Am I willing!"

"The point is," Scott said, "there's a string attached. Some changes will have to be made. At least one head is going to roll. I checked those boxes you measure corn with. They're about thirty per cent too large. Somebody's switched measures on you. Then I looked at the head gate again. There's a wedge pounded into one of the logs so that it was bound to swell and stick. Mike," he concluded, "I'm no detective, but anyone who hadn't grown fat on the milk of human kindness would know you're being jobbed again!"

Don Gonzalo's cigarette snapped into the garden. *"Estos Indios!"*

Scott looked at him. "Let's not talk about Indians," he said. "Let's talk about foremen. Who's paying you to mark the cards, my friend?"

Don Gonzalo was on his feet. "What does the señor signify?"

"That I'm recommending your dismissal."

Pryor was staggered. "Dammit, Scott, why pick on my foreman?"

"Because, whether or not he's been pulling it off himself," Scott said, "he must have known these things were going on. That's not enough to jail him, but it's enough to ride him out of here on a rail."

Don Gonzalo continued to stand there, accepting in silent fury the challenge of Scott's gaze. His right hand slowly rubbed his thigh; Scott was suddenly conscious of the revolver at his side. It had never acquired personality until now. It was a moment of tension, which broke suddenly as a horseman jogged around the corner of the hacienda.

PRYOR lurched up, relieved. "Let's check this later. We've got big company, Scott—Don Luis Palacio. Palacio and pulque are synonymous. He owns the biggest *magueyal* in the state."

Don Gonzalo turned and marched stiffly into the building. They went to meet the visitor, who had dismounted at the gate. He was a colorful man in a blue cotton shirt and tight pantaloons, with big Amozoc spurs at his heels and a red-and-gray poncho flung over his shoulder. His brown moonface was pocked; the eyes were muddy but cordial.

He clasped Pryor in his arms, pounding him on the back. *"Qué cosa?"* he cried. "I do not see you in more of two weeks!" He and Scott shook hands. Don Luis spoke a few words of mutilated English just to show that he could.

In the big drafty *sala* they had drinks while they waited for dinner. In honor of Don Luis, dinner was a prodigious affair founded upon three meat courses. As the servant brought in platters of mangoes and small Córdoba bananas, Don Luis inquired, "Don Gonzalo did not desire to eat?"

"Don Gonzalo," Pryor said, "is sulking. Well, you know the situation here. Scott is trying to straighten things out. He's recommended that I let Don Gonzalo go."

Don Luis paused. "But that man is a miracle!"

Pryor shrugged. "Scott doesn't seem to think so."

Puzzled, the rancher glanced at Scott. Kay Pryor, as might have been expected, changed the subject.

IN the morning Scott found the Huamantla trip had assumed the proportions of an excursion. Anita had a telephone call to make and desired to go along. Don Luis wished to buy materials for some repair work at his ranch and would make a third. With a workman in the back of the truck, they started across the tumbled hills which bordered the plateau on the north.

It was twenty-five miles to Huamantla, at the foot of the mountains. They arrived in an enormously dirty, quaint colonial city. The telephone office was off a shady plaza crisscrossed with red-and-white tile walks. Sidewalk vendors hawked sizzling *tacos.*

Don Luis sprang down to open the door. Anita started for the office. But the Mexican laid a finger on Scott's arm and his smile telegraphed a message: "Forgive me, señorita. Place your call. Don Beel comes *ahorita."*

He walked Scott to a *cantina* at the corner called the Kiss of Death. They had small glasses of acid-breathed mescal. Don Luis frowned over some thought. At length, he said, "This difficulty with the ranch. Naturally one hesitates to speak to Don Miguel. But if—I am attempting to say that in the event of emergency, you may count on my assistance. Don Miguel is *buen' hombre."*

Scott said, "It's good of you."

Don Luis stroked his nose. "However," he added dubiously, "he must expect a certain amount of difficulty. A *norteamericano* understands neither the Indian nor the climate. Should you think it best to sell the hacienda, do not forget Don Luis, eh?"

"You think it might be best?" Scott asked him.

Don Luis peered into his drink. "The question is one of a slow death or a quick one. To sell him out now would leave him a certain amount of capital. To let him go bankrupt a year from now would scarcely be a kindness. I have often thought," he murmured, "of the advantages of a ranch with irrigation. At the moment I have ten thousand young plants to set out. I visualize them along the river—I see the *agua miel* pouring from them faster than the *acocotes* of the workmen can draw it out." He waited for Scott to reply.

"But if I were to sell him out, how can you be sure you'd be the one to get the ranch?"

"Because it would be so profitable for you to see that I did!"

"In the States," Scott said, "we'd call that conspiracy to defraud."

"This, however, is Mexico. Here we call it the bite. If I pick a ripe pear from someone else's tree, there is a bite for my friend who saw me."

"How big a bite for Don Gonzalo?"

"Don Gonzalo? What has he to do with it?"

"That's what I'm wondering," Scott said. "If I were to answer you the way I'd like, Don Luis, you'd be wiping mescal out of your eyes right now." He rose.

"Let us not be *burro."* Don Luis tossed a coin on the table. There was a blunt anger in his flushed face. Scott showed how he felt by laying a peso beside his own glass. They went out. The Mexican stared stonily down the street. "I have much to do," he said. "If you will excuse me."

Scott went back to the telephone office. He knew now who had been working in the dark to ruin San Marcos. He was certain that Don Gonzalo had been on the *hacendado's* payroll. He had cut out that one rotten spot, but how many more remained? Don Luis possessed the advantage of knowing how to corrupt the Indian. It was not a set-up to inspire confidence.

Scott had an obligation to the company and to himself. He had turned his back on better-looking deals than this. But when he reached the telephone office he had not changed his mind. Maybe it was for Mike. Or maybe it was for a girl too proud to appreciate it anyway.

ANITA was waiting in the truck. The operator informed Scott that there would be a two-hour wait for his call. Scott told Anita, "We might as well make like tourists and see the church." After an hour, he began to forget he had found it difficult to talk with her that other night. She seemed more at ease today.

She said abruptly, "You know, I don't think I'm afraid of you any more, Mr. Scott."

"After all, why should you be?" he asked her.

"I suppose Kay told you why I'm here?"

"Something about a missing husband, isn't it?"

"And about the Falangists—the Spanish revolutionaries. Oh, yes, it's a dead fire now," she said, "but if you were to turn the coals, you might still find a spark or two. A week after I reached Mexico, a shot was fired into the taxi I was riding in. So when you arrived at San Marcos, I wondered."

"That's nice," Scott said. "You're the first girl who's ever told me I looked dangerous. Usually they scratch me behind the ears. You still hope to find your husband?"

Anita's fingers turned a plain gold wedding band. "It would be foolish to pretend that he is still alive, after seven years. I heard from him only twice after he left. The last time was from San Marcos."

Listening to the slow music of her voice, Scott suddenly had it—the reason for his suspicion of the other night. It was slight, but it was puzzling. He said, "You have a flair for languages, haven't you. If you hadn't told me, I'd never have suspected you were Spanish. You've picked up the Mexican idiom perfectly. You haven't a trace of the lisp; you even hang onto those final syllables."

She shrugged. "I've been in Mexico nearly a year. You know a Spaniard isn't always popular here. It was to my advantage to learn the idiom."

Scott let it ride. He wasn't sure, himself, what he was driving at, except that he thought her Spanish was about as Castilian as the jargon of a Mexican pawnbroker. He saw the operator waving at him from the door of the office, and hurried to take the call.

ON the way back Don Luis was silent, driving with sullen purpose. In a windy dusk they arrived at San Marcos. Dinner was late and not gay. Don Luis, with a fifteen-mile horseback ride ahead of him, decided to stay over another night. At ten o'clock, Scott decided to go to bed. He had just removed his coat when a pebble struck the roof. Someone called, "Hey!"

He went out. The ranch was brilliant with moonlight. A shape stood at the foot of the knoll. Kay Pryor called up to him, "Can you operate a stern paddle, gringo? It's a perfect night for canoeing."

Scott pulled on a sweater and hurried down the hill. He knew what was on her mind: gratitude for what he was doing for her father. She was carrying the paddles over her shoulder. She wore a sweater and a skirt and *guarachas,* and, except for a ribbon, her blonde hair was hanging free.

They got in the canoe. She had the sort of figure a sweater is kind to. They paddled into the narrow stream. The canoe moved like a shadow over the water.

Kay smiled back at him, holding the paddle poised. "I must have felt festive," she said. "I haven't got out the canoe for months."

"It wouldn't have anything to do with the farming situation?"

"It might. You know, I've never liked people with sharp pencils—not since L. A. I made up my mind to put crackers in your bed, but you spoiled my plans. And I love it."

She dipped the paddle again and they flashed from the trees into the open. The moon worked magic with the water, streaking the black with silver. Scott watched her slim shoulders as she stroked; her blonde hair was sprinkled with catch-lights. When they came to the head gate, she steered the canoe into the bank and stepped out.

They climbed the bank; under their feet the deep grass was slippery. Kay held his arm. She said, "You want to look out for— Oh!" She gave a little scream and came suddenly against him.

Scott had heard about water snakes; he had seen the branch when his foot turned it, too. But it was a pleasant deceit to pick her up and carry her to the path. She was an amazingly easy burden.

Kay put her hand lightly against his shoulder—a casual but obvious signal. He put her down. "I don't suppose they're dangerous," she said, "but I hate them worse than mice."

They walked on. The stream, falling in a glistening dark arch across the head gate, burst into foam in the pool below. Near by was a tree with great gnarled roots that made a seat. The lights of the ranch were tiny glints across the river.

"I wonder if you know just how much you've done for Dad," Kay said. "He's a pretty cool customer, but there's a core inside him as unsteady as a card house. He'll be getting his first decent sleep in months. And that means me, too!" she added. "I've sat up with a sick bank account once or twice myself."

"To hear you talk," Scott said, "I could believe you really wanted to stay."

"And don't I?" Her glance touched him curiously.

"Of course not. You're homesick. You want to go back and see what the other women are wearing and find out what it's like to turn a handle and get hot water. You're eating your heart out for it all?"

SUDDENLY there was a liquid brightness in her eyes. "You know I am! I wake up dreaming of cheeseburgers, and the shops on Wilshire, and a nice twenty-seven-fifty-a-week job where I typed and filed, and—"

"Then why in heaven," Scott demanded, "don't you sell out and go back?"

Her small fist struck the earth. "Because it's time the Pryor clan showed it's more than a family of tramps! I think Great-Grandpa Pryor manufactured shoes. Anyway, he left Grandpa Pryor enough to play the ponies and collect oils. Dad sold them and went in for yachts. Then they talked him into fronting for that investment firm. He was as happy as a kid with a summer job. It was the first thing he'd ever done that was any more commercial than mixing a Martini. And you know how that wound up. . . .

"So now," she said, "we've got one more swing at the ball. It's not that I'm afraid of being broke. I'm only afraid of what one more failure

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SEPT. 21 ISSUE

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now would do to our backbones."

But her bitterness passed quickly. She was smiling when she said, "In other words, you've given us one more inning. You're our favorite gringo, Don Bill."

It was his cue to be whimsical; but he had suddenly a queer feeling of panic. The closeness and the loveliness of her was in his head like a perfume. There was a pulsing shadow in her throat which strangely excited him. . . .

He thought wildly: Well, kiss her and get it over with! But something warned him that that would be no solution at all. Love wasn't a plant that grew in thirty-six hours; and yet there was a turbulence in him that he was afraid to name.

He got himself in hand somehow. He looked at his watch. "Eleven o'clock!" he said. "Mike will be worrying."

Kay hugged her knees. The match flickered back at him from her eyes teasingly. "He doesn't even know I'm gone," she said. "I suppose we should be starting back, though—"

She raised both hands to him and he helped her up. It brought her close. That was when he knew that whatever had happened to him had happened to her too.

He thought he would never forget her lips, like warm satin, nor the breathless crushing of her body against him. He would remember the way his fingers drifted through her hair while their lips remained together. He kissed her eyelids and heard the faint catching of her breath. . . .

A long time later he heard her whisper, "Make me go back, darling. We can't let the sun come up on our first date!"

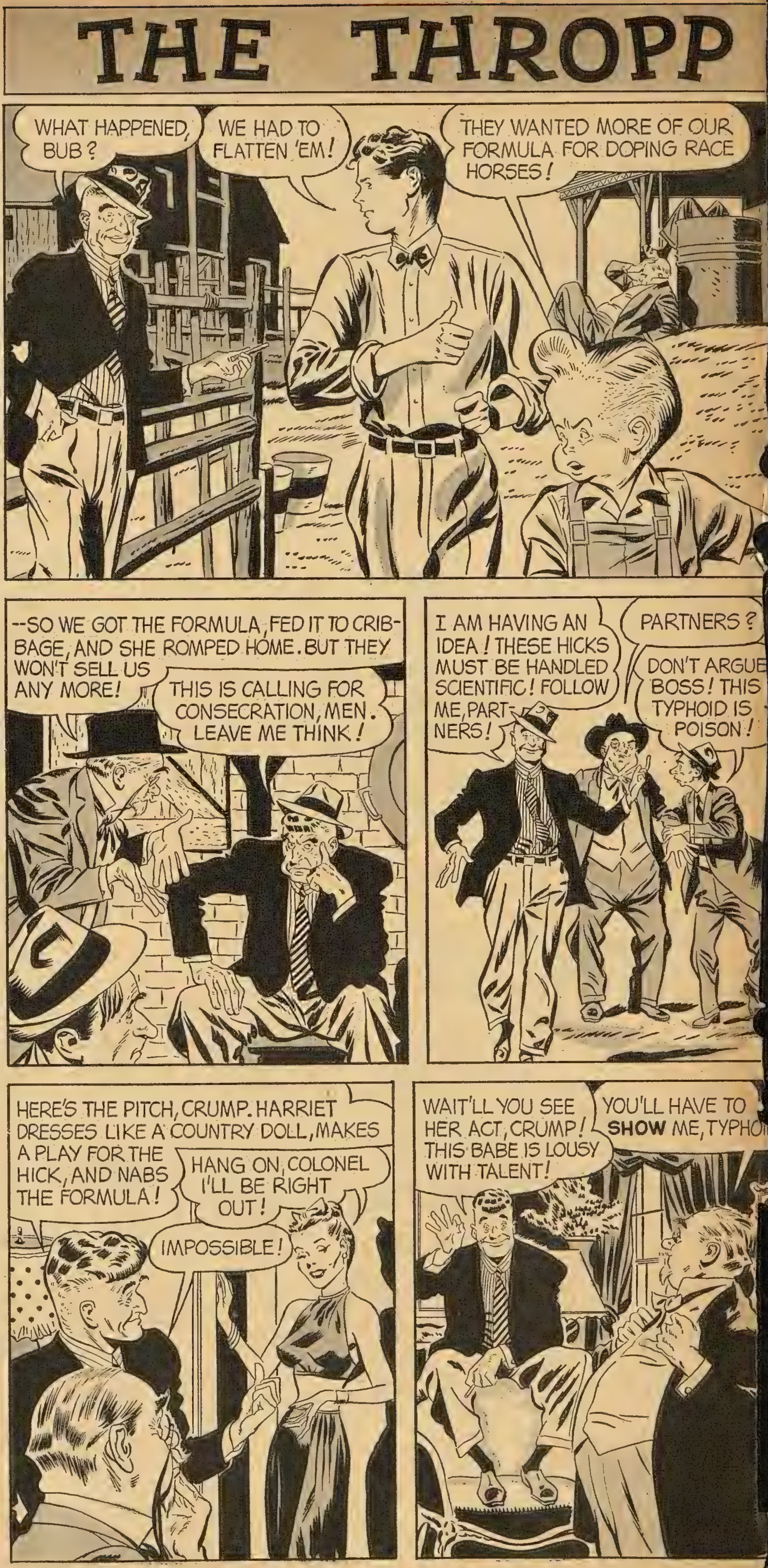
Going back in the canoe was drifting through a mist of stars. When he left her at the gate, she whispered, "I'm glad it happened tonight instead of last night!" And he knew what she meant. It gave truth to something which, last night, could have been a lie.

HE strode up the hill in a kind of rosy delirium. A thread of light glowed through a crack in the door as he fitted the key in the lock. He didn't recall having left the lamp on, but when he opened the door he saw it burning softly on the table.

Then he saw the soot on the hearth. Scott frowned. Had a servant been trying to clean the flue while he was out? He let the door close, and at that moment, just as he started toward the fireplace, he saw Anita de Vega standing in the shadows at the foot of the bed.

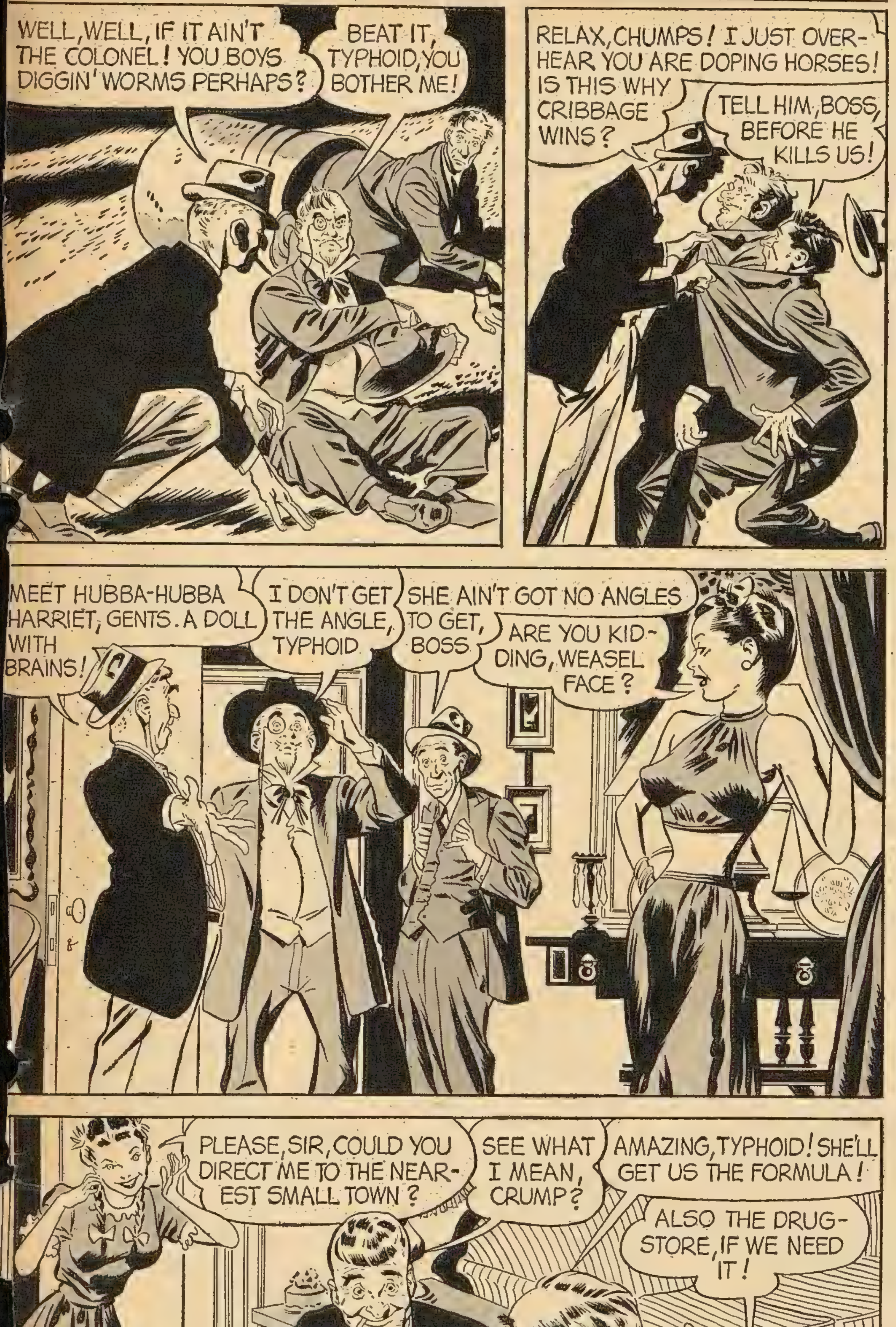
There was soot on her face and hands and dress. In her right hand she held an iron poker. Yet she was smiling, a thin strained sort of smile. "Sit down, Mr. Scott," she said. "As you see, I hadn't quite finished. Now you're here, you might as well help."

The conclusion of this story will appear next week.


THE THROPP
WHAT HAPPENED, BUB?
WE HAD TO FLATTEN 'EM!
THEY WANTED MORE OF OUR FORMULA FOR DOPING RACE HORSES!
--SO WE GOT THE FORMULA, FED IT TO CRIBBAGE, AND SHE ROMPED HOME. BUT THEY WON'T SELL US ANY MORE!
THIS IS CALLING FOR CONSECRATION, MEN. LEAVE ME THINK!
I AM HAVING AN IDEA! THESE HICKS MUST BE HANDLED SCIENTIFIC! FOLLOW ME, PARTNERS!
PARTNERS?
DON'T ARGUE BOSS! THIS TYPHOID IS POISON!
HERE'S THE PITCH, CRUMP. HARRIET DRESSES LIKE A COUNTRY DOLL, MAKES A PLAY FOR THE HICK, AND NABS THE FORMULA!
HANG ON, COLONEL I'LL BE RIGHT OUT!
IMPOSSIBLE!
WAIT'LL YOU SEE HER ACT, CRUMP! THIS BABE IS LOUSY WITH TALENT!
YOU'LL HAVE TO SHOW ME, TYPHO

FAMILY

Written by **LAWRENCE LARIAR**
Illustrated by **DONLOU**


WELL, WELL, IF IT AIN'T THE COLONEL! YOU BOYS DIGGIN' WORMS PERHAPS?
BEAT IT, TYPHOID, YOU BOTHER ME!
RELAX, CHUMPS! I JUST OVERHEAR YOU ARE DOPING HORSES! IS THIS WHY CRIBBAGE WINS?
TELL HIM, BOSS, BEFORE HE KILLS US!
MEET HUBBA-HUBBA HARRIET, GENTS. A DOLL WITH BRAINS!
I DON'T GET THE ANGLE, TYPHOID
SHE AIN'T GOT NO ANGLES TO GET, BOSS
ARE YOU KIDDING, WEASEL FACE?
PLEASE, SIR, COULD YOU DIRECT ME TO THE NEAREST SMALL TOWN?
SEE WHAT I MEAN, CRUMP?
AMAZING, TYPHOID! SHE'LL GET US THE FORMULA!
ALSO THE DRUGSTORE, IF WE NEED IT!

Continued next week

PIONEERS OF THE GREAT UNKNOWN

Continued from Page 17

That trip gave Jeannette Piccard the first woman's membership in the very select group of people who have explored the stratosphere. Beginning with Auguste Piccard and his aides, and including Jean and Mrs. Piccard, fifteen people have ballooned into the land of scarce air. Four of the fifteen, three Russians and one German, lost their lives.

Mrs. Piccard, the mother of three sons, insists that piloting a balloon into the stratosphere is "no more dangerous than crossing the street." She may be right, but, even so, most of us ground-hugging mortals would choose the street rather than ride a pressurized sphere either up or down.

THAT'S the amazing thing about Auguste Piccard's proposed trip down—it isn't so very different from Jean's trip up! It will be made in the same kind of vehicle, using the same methods for rising and descending, posing the same problems and flaunting the same kind of dangers.

Take a look at the round gondola swinging below those 100 gas-filled balloons. It's custom-made, of aluminum, airtight, built for lightness and ability to withstand the tremendous outward pressure in the scarce-air atmosphere. It has an airtight screw-down pressure hatch, or round door, and double-glass porthole windows with air space between.

Now look at the vehicle in which Auguste proposes to venture four miles down—down where his little chamber of air will be subjected to the tremendous water pressure. It's a sphere, too, a huge steel ball, because a sphere withstands pressure better than any other shape. It, too, is custom-made and airtight, with pressure hatch and reinforced windows.

The most unusual thing about this submarine sphere—the piont where it differs most from William Beebe's bathysphere in which he ventured a half mile down—is that it has no cable.

Auguste proposes to move up and down through four long miles of pressure-pounding water by the ballast-buoyant method of the balloonist. No cable to pull him up or down, no powerful motors such as the submarine has; just some pieces of iron and some gasoline. A mother ship will follow his strange craft with submarine-detecting devices.

Auguste will start with both heavier-than-water material (iron) and lighter-than-water liquid (gasoline) attached to the outside of his ocean-diving sphere. And he'll have the two adjusted so the downward pull of the sphere and its heavier-than-water contents is exactly balanced by the upward pull of the buoyant gasoline—in other words, so the sphere would remain suspended under water without either settling down or bobbing up.

When it comes time to go down, release a little gasoline (it's in watertight bags) and down you go. If you see a strange creature at one mile down and want to make sure it's not a beautiful mermaid, drop a little iron to balance things up again, and whoa, you stop.

Nope, it's not a mermaid, so off goes a bit more gasoline and down you go again. You can keep this up as long as your ballast and buoyants don't get too close to the danger line. You'll have to save enough, of course, to escalate you to the surface.

Oddly enough, both twins worked out this method in almost exactly the same detail when they were Minnesota to Switzerland apart, and without ever having written to each other about it. The Piccards explain it away as merely the next logical step in using pressurized spheres.

The brothers *are* very much alike. Almost everything you can say about one is also true of the other. They're both tall and thin, 155 or so pounds distributed over six feet two inches of frame. They both have long thin faces, high intellectual foreheads which are heightened by balding spots encroaching on the long tousled hair behind. They don't look like daring adventurers, but even at sixty-two, they're both still explorer-fit. Jean is right-handed and Auguste is left-handed—that's the biggest difference.

THE best way to show how Jean Piccard and Mrs. Piccard work as a team is to draw a word-picture of what their flight into the stratosphere will probably be like.

They've been waiting for a calm night and this looks like the one. The ground crew gets to work under the lights at the University of Minnesota airfield. The gondola is carried out and staked down. The new plastic balloons—100 of them—are spotted in a huge circle around the black-and-white gondola. The hydrogen tanks are distributed and the job of inflating the balloons begins. Each balloon will be sixty feet in diameter and will hold 100,000 cubic feet when it reaches the top of its climb, but on the ground it starts only 1.5 per cent inflated.

While this inflation is going on, there are ballast bags of sand hanging outside the gondola to be checked, sand-releasing blasting caps in each bag to be inspected, and the final connections to be made on the electrical system which will explode the caps and drop the sand.

Finally all is ready for the ascent. The Piccards slide through the hatch and make a last-second check. Then the pilot says, "Cast off," the balloons swing up in a giant arc, meet 700 feet above the gondola, tug gently at their burden, and the plastic cluster starts the long lift toward the top of the stratosphere.

Even from the start the ascent seems smooth and easy. You have none of that going-up-in-an-elevator feeling. At 2,000 feet the pressure door on the gondola is screwed tight. For the rest of the trip, the Piccards will work under 2,000-foot conditions, no matter how thin the air outside.

Mrs. Piccard establishes contact with the ground by short-wave radio. Both Piccards are busy jotting notes, checking instruments. The instruments themselves are making self-contained recordings as we go up, and these will be opened only in the scientific laboratory.

The temperature outside is dropping. It usually gets one degree colder for each 300-foot rise in altitude. The sky is changing, too. At 25,000 feet it's a dark blue, by 35,000 it's a darker blue, and it becomes progressively still darker as we go up. That's because the higher the altitude, the less of the shorter wave lengths of light (the blues) have been scattered by the atmosphere.

At 52,000 feet the Piccards have passed Auguste's first stratosphere mark; at 54,000 the high point on his second trip. At 58,000, Jean smiles at his wife and points to the altimeter. They have passed their own former top height. Then, in rapid succession, they pass the marks of Commander Settle, U.S.N., 61,237 feet, and those of the two Russian flights, 62,324 and 67,508. It was in the latter flight that the three balloonists lost their lives.

Finally the Piccards are above Stevens and Anderson's height record of 72,395 feet. It's now time to drop a ballast bag to get more lift. "Fire one sandbag," Mrs. Piccard says, and her husband plunges a bayonetlike point into the firing socket for one of the ballast bags. The sand drops and the balloon gets the needed upward impetus.

The sky is a very dark blue-black now, almost deep violet above and outward to the horizon. You can still see the earth, but only a few large rivers and lakes can be distinguished from this height.

From now on up, the cosmic-ray measurements the Piccards are taking become increasingly important, because scientific scrutiny has never been leveled on the rays above 73,000 feet. (That's the primary reason for the projected trip of the Piccards next summer.)

Cosmic rays are one of science's most important tools in the struggle to rclease more and better atomic energy. They cannot be produced artificially in the laboratory, so if you want to study cosmic rays, the stratosphere is the place to go. Scientists disagree on exactly what a cosmic ray is, but the dominant school (including the Piccards) believes it is an electrically charged particle of matter which travels like a bullet, only much faster.

Auguste Piccard, on one of his U. S. lecture tours, said, "The transformation of the atoms of three drops of water would produce enough cosmic rays and enough energy and motor power to light up the whole city of Washington through a night."

The Russians, too, are known to believe that cosmic rays in the upper stratosphere guard the secret of new atomic knowledge.

But to get back to our imaginary preview of the Piccards' flight. More ballast is shot loose and the craft continues its rise. A little more than two hours from the time the gondola left the university airfield, they're twenty miles up and at the top of their climb.

The sky's so black the sun and stars both shine at the same time. It's the top edge of the stratosphere where only 1 per cent of the earth's atmosphere is between the balloons and the vacuum of interstellar space; where oxygen still comprises its usual 21 per cent of the air, but where the air is so scarce that human lungs cannot possibly gulp enough oxygen to sustain life.

THEY'VE been at the top of the stratosphere four hours now, with the tiny propeller on one side of the gondola pulling them slowly round and round, so the cosmic rays coming from each direction can be measured. In spite of the intense cold outside, it is comfortable in the gondola. That's because of a technique worked out by Auguste. In the stratosphere the sun's rays on the gondola are very hot, since there is little of the earth's atmosphere to shield it. But the heat loss in such cold air is also terrific. In fact, if it weren't for the protection of the gondola, a man would freeze to death while his skin was being burned black by the sun.

After much experimenting, Auguste suggested to his brother Jean that the lower 55 per cent of his gondola be painted a heat-absorbing black for warmth and the upper 45 per cent white. That Jean did, with such perfect results that at noon in the stratosphere the temperature inside was 67 above; outside, 67 below.

It's about time to go down now. The Piccards estimate that on such a flight as this they would have drifted 400 or 500 miles southeast. It'll take two or three hours to descend, and they want to make sure they land before sunset—too many high-tension wires to risk an after-dark landing.

There are some who say the Piccards won't make their projected trips, but not nearly so many as said they wouldn't make their original ones. Both brothers believe they will, and they're spending all their spare time making advance preparations. Auguste's venture will be sponsored by the Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research. Jean will start building his gondola and balloons as soon as $300,000 is obtained for expenses.

There's plenty of ups and downs left in the Piccards yet.

THE END

HAIRBREADTH HAROLD

Continued from Page 23

and enter the Universal gate freely at noon. So the next day he brought his make-up kit, applied the grease paint behind a billboard, joined a bunch of extras who had eaten well, walked on the lot and right into a mob scene. Luckily for Harold, another mobster of the moment was a robust young man named Hal Roach who was ambitious to be a producer. The two struck up a friendship, and when a relative died and left young Roach a few thousand dollars, he promptly formed his own company and hired Lloyd as his first star. This partnership lasted for years, to the profit of both.

It was during this time that Lloyd played the Willie Work and Lonesome Luke roles.

"Each comic had a trade-mark in those days," says Lloyd. "I assembled what I thought was the best of all of them—baggy pants, catlike mustache, broad shoulders, and tiny hat." Later he hit upon the idea of just being himself except for the lensless (because of the reflection from studio lights) horn-rimmed glasses. The money began to roll in.

Today Harold Lloyd is one of Hollywood's few bona fide multimillionaires. He came in early in the fabulous Golden Era of Hollywood, long before the U. S. government put the bite on movie salaries.

EARNEST, quiet-mannered, and unassuming, he was never one of Hollywood's flashy playboys. He intelligently stashed away his dough in real estate and gilt-edge bonds. His one big splash was, and is, his home. For years he has lived on a thirty-five-acre estate, the most expensive in Beverly Hills, with cascading fountains, terraces, gardens, statuary, greenhouses, a barbecue pit, tennis courts, a handball court, a nine-hole golf course, and a huge heated swimming pool. Before the war he had as many as thirty persons working on his estate. Today he has reduced his staff to six.

The Lloyd bank balance wouldn't suffer if he never worked another day. And as he gets only about two cents on the dollar, due to his high-income tax bracket, you wouldn't think he'd want to work at all, let alone do anything as strenuous and dangerous as hanging from a lion's neck.

It's a well-known fact, however, that no one ever retires voluntarily in Hollywood. After Lloyd went on the side lines as a comedian, he tried directing and producing. The haul was good but his heart wasn't in it. Then, seven years ago, following Professor Beware, The Milky Way, and The Cat's Paw, he retired. But whenever he saw a high girder he had a fit of nostalgia.

He started reading scripts and stories, and he figures he must have read more than 2,000 in those seven years of his "retirement." He was ripe for picking when the wily Mr. Sturges came along.

Among his earlier full-length comedies were such successful films as Doctor Jack, Safety Last, Why Worry? The Freshman, Girl Shy, The Kid Brother, For Heaven's Sake, and Speedy.

Welcome Danger was his first talking picture. Soft-spoken Harold, like Charlie Chaplin and many of his contemporaries, didn't like to talk. He still thinks, and many a long-suffering moviegoer will agree with him, that there's much too much dialogue in present-day pictures. People want action, he says. In Diddlebock, words—even Mr. Sturges' expensive witty words—have been cut to a minimum.

LLOYD is still married to Mildred Davis, who was his leading lady in several of his comedies. They have three children, Gloria, twenty-one; Peggy, twenty; and fifteen-year-old Harold, Jr. Gloria, after rejecting several film offers, signed this spring with International Pictures, and will make her screen debut in Bella Donna, the Oberon-Brent starrer. Peggy is a student at the University of Southern California and hasn't decided about her future. Harold, Jr., is a student at Harvard Military Academy in Los Angeles. He has no particular acting ambitions.

Lloyd's main off-screen enthusiasm is the Shrine. He is a ranking officer of the Imperial Divan and by normal succession will be the Imperial Potentate in 1949. He is an active member of the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce and takes his civic responsibilities seriously.

When asked if he'll continue to make more comedy thrillers after Diddlebock, Lloyd cagily replied, "Nobody knows what Diddlebock will do at the box office. I'm ham enough to think it will be popular. But I'd be silly to say I'm going to keep on making pictures before I find out whether anybody wants to see me."

Glendale says Lloyd hasn't a worry in the world. And Glendale rarely misses.

THE END

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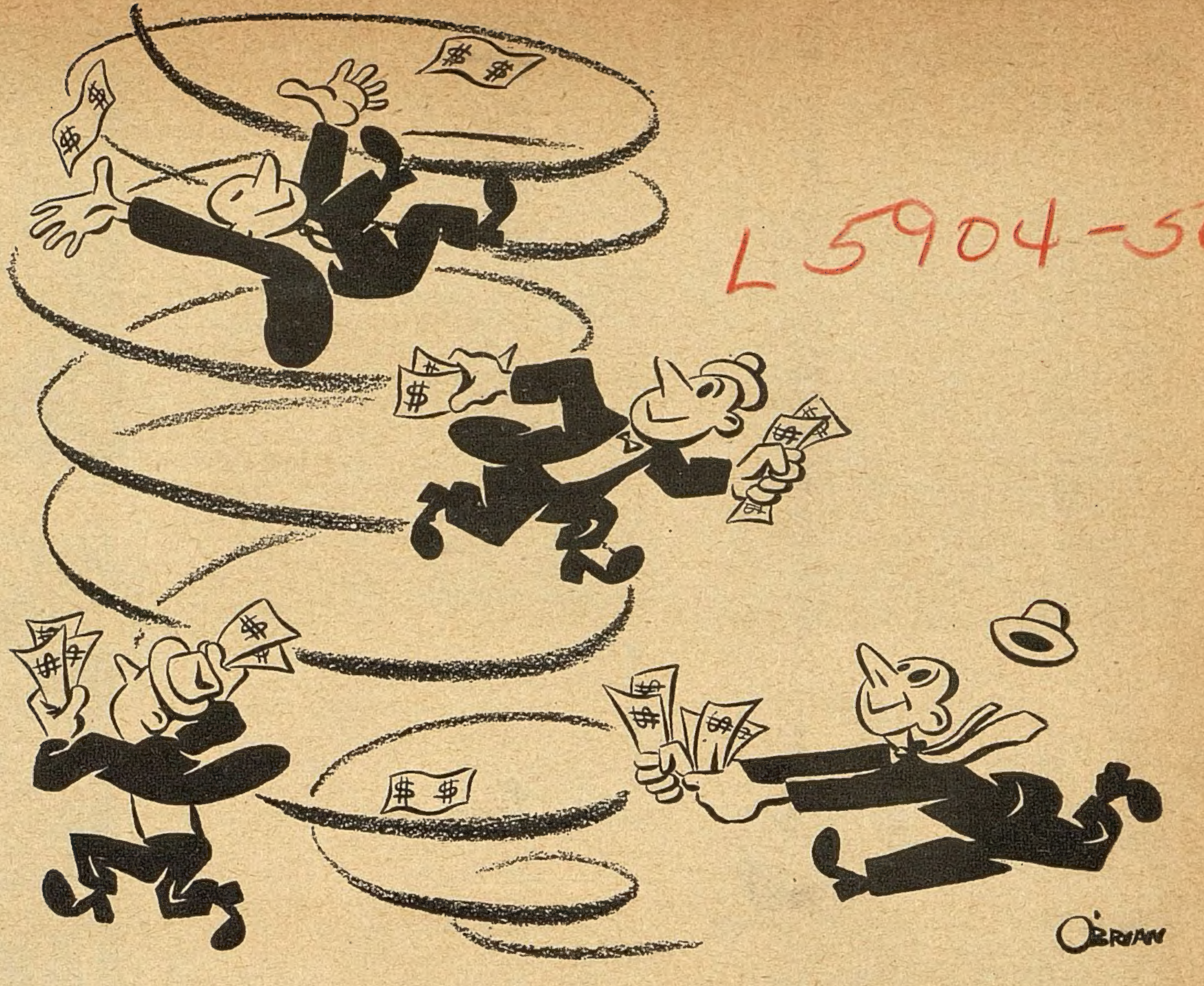

IS BOOM AND BUST INEVITABLE?

THE crushing rejoinder which advocates of continuing government control of our economic life make to those who disagree with them is, "Whaddya want, boom and bust?" Put this way, few of us would want to answer other than "No." And yet we also want to return as quickly as possible to comparative economic freedom. The question thus becomes, Can we have freedom without recurring disaster?

We have all become so gun shy about these words, "boom and bust," that it's time we looked them squarely in the eye. Let's ask and answer a few simple questions.

Q.—What causes a boom?

A.—People spend all they make and borrow to the limit so they can spend more. This causes abnormal demand, higher prices, and a rapid speed-up of the business machine.

Q.—What causes a bust?

A.—People reach the limit of their spending and borrowing power. Demand fails. The industrial machine has to slow down; goods don't move; prices fall; jobs are lost; foreclosures take place and a general spiral of deflation sets in.

Q.—Can booms and busts be prevented?

A.—Yes, if we learn to earn before we spend, produce more before we demand more, and generally accept the responsibility and self-restraint which freedom imposes on us. Unless we do so, we're always going to have booms and busts until eventually we give up our freedom for the "security" of a lower standard of living planned by government.

Thus we come upon the nub of the question. The basic responsibility rests upon us as a free people to order our affairs so that we may keep free, and at the same time create for ourselves the ever-increasing abundance of good things which is possible for us only under freedom. Boom and bust is not inevitable under our system if we create before we consume. It is inevitable if we demand too much betterment too fast, and then, when the bust comes, call on government to save us from the consequences of our irresponsibility. Any competent psychologist knows that the more we do so the more we weaken our character and the ability to govern ourselves. The mother who always shields her boy from the consequences of his childish misdeeds is destroying his character and laying the groundwork for future delinquency and irresponsibility. The drunk whose overindulgences are covered up by his friends and forgiven by his boss proceeds to get drunker and drunker until he's a hopeless case.

Businessmen cannot of themselves bring about a boom, nor can they prevent one. Only we, the people, forgetting past lessons, can throw ourselves into that reckless type of inflationary spending with no thought of tomorrow which inevitably must end in a crash.

Boom and bust, like sin, is something everyone is against but, like sin, laws won't keep us from it. It takes faith, responsibility, self-respect, and a lot of good old-fashioned preaching.

Paul Hunter

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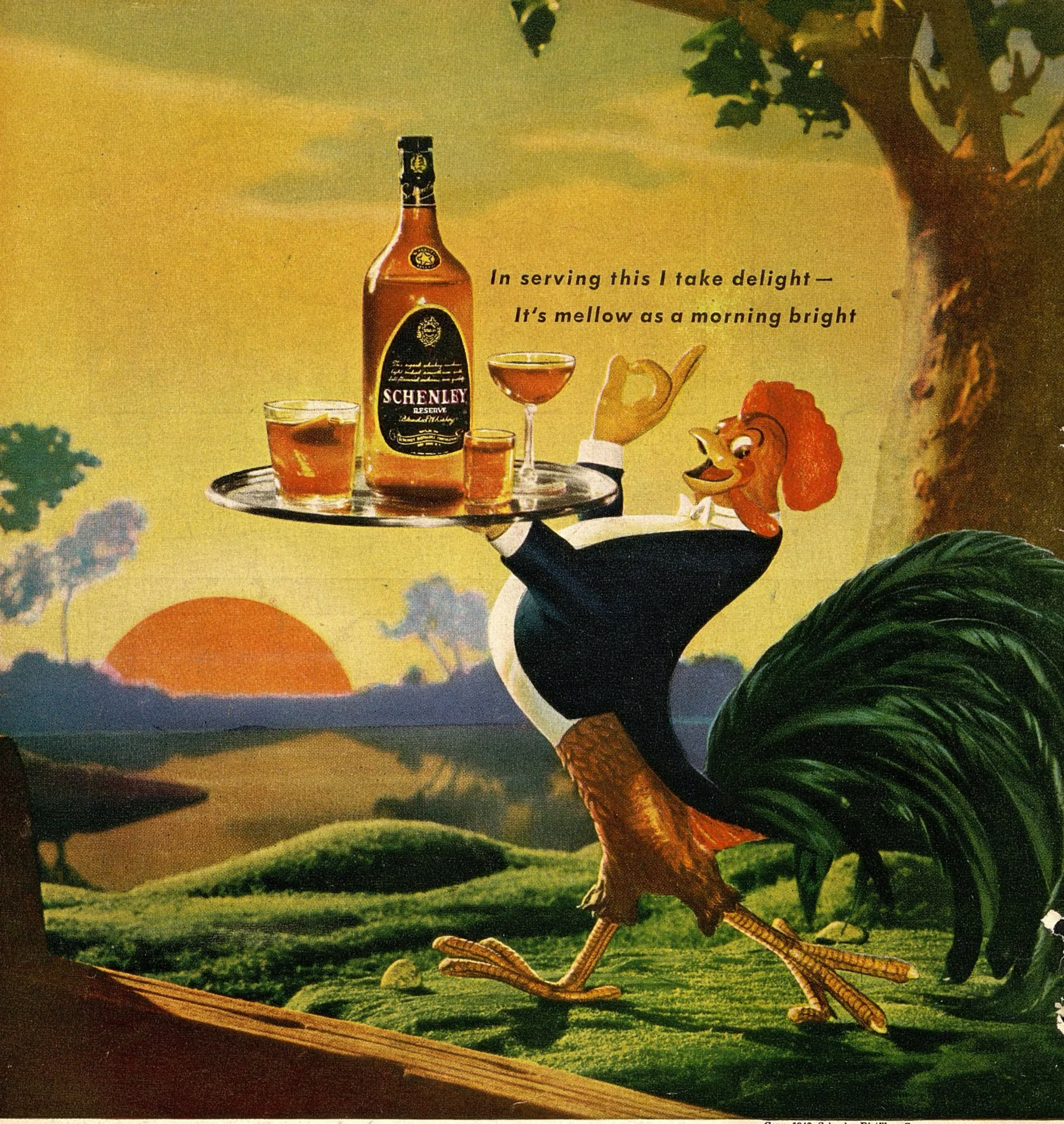
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